

Exhibition Strategies

INTRODUCTION

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Barbara Le Maître and Senta Siewert

Titled *Exhibition Strategies*, this chapter is structured as a dialogue between, on the one hand, a reasoned panorama of the contemporary presence of film in museums and galleries and, on the other hand, a series of shorter approaches concentrating on visual objects, more specific phenomena and issues. The latter aims to put into perspective the questions raised in the panorama, which necessarily reach beyond the sole medium of film to affect the vast territory of media art.

At stake beneath what Philippe Dubois qualifies as “the cinema effect in contemporary art” (see his contribution to this chapter) is, first and foremost, the overview of the wide-ranging phenomenon of migration by which cinema, exceeding its traditional apparatus, took its independence from the darkness of theaters in which it had been projected until then to enter museum spaces where it is now exhibited. This phenomenon of migration is considered within a historical perspective (where video, as it turns out, played the part of a decisive relay between cinema and the museum) as well as an aesthetic perspective (in which changes involving the primary apparatus of cinema, spectators included, or the film-object, are traced).

Secondly, three sets of texts complement, comment, expand on, or clarify the questions already raised. The first set, entitled *Exhibiting Images in Movement*, articulates contemporary as well as less recent instances of the problem. Indeed, some exhibition choices recently made by the ZKM – Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe (Claudia d’Alonzo and the exhibition *Mindframes* –

Media Study at Buffalo 1973-1990, for instance) stand to benefit from a comparison with principles of arrangement preceding them, those implemented by Dominique Païni as part of his programming work at the Cinémathèque française, to mention but one example (see Stéphanie-Emmanuelle Louis's contribution to this chapter). Besides, once in the museum, film de facto finds itself compared to one of the emblematic objects of the place, the painting; the issue of "exhibited cinema" is thus also related to the predominant model of painting (see Barbara Le Maître). This first set of texts proposes a kind of travel in time, as the question of the exhibition of moving images changes according to various technical or technological eras.

A second group of texts titled *The Image Travelling Across Territories* outlines the underpinnings of the contemporary economy (in the usual sense of a distribution in social space) and geography of moving images. Some of the themes thus approached are the passages between art – in the 1960s and the 1970s, this consisted of performance, installation, and conceptual art – and cinema (Ariane Noël de Tilly), before the circulation of music videos, from television to museums, festivals, and the Internet (Senta Siewert), down to the multiple experiences of augmented reality and cyber technologies conducted through the media lab V2_ Institute for Unstable Media (Arie Altena).

Finally, a third section titled *New Dispositifs, New Modes of Reception* addresses the issue of changes in the cinematographic apparatus, raised by Philippe Dubois, notably by offering analyses of particular works which, each in its own way but always at a productive distance from cinema, rethink the film-object, its regime of representation, its mode of perception, or the spectatorial body it implies (see Teresa Castro on the conversion of the film into a map, or Térésa Faucon on the installation as an experience of montage). Elena Biserna's text proposes a reflection on the reinstallation of a work by Max Neuhaus which, though it does not refer to the cinematographic apparatus, may be related to some film practices: indeed, one may wonder what the contemporary practices of recreating installations or exhibitions share with the traditional film remake. Beyond the analysis of specific cases, this part of the book also features an essay on the online availability of representations of video art (Renate Buschmann).

Last but not least, this chapter does not claim to be exhaustive, as many other theoretical propositions and objects could have found a place in its construction. The structure has been laid out but it is not closed: it could integrate still more elements and is a lever more than a comprehensive survey. In our view, it constitutes an instrument designed for appropriation and further thought.

9.1 FROM CINEMA TO THE MUSEUM: A STATE OF AFFAIRS

9.1.1 A “CINEMA EFFECT” IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Philippe Dubois

Two Symptomatic and Symmetrical Exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou

There is ample evidence that international contemporary art, at all levels and in every way, is being “invaded” by what I call a cinema effect; this can both provoke irritation as well as pique curiosity, as shown by current events in the arts. One example perfectly epitomizes this phenomenon: in April/May 2006, the Centre Pompidou programmed two significant events, the quasi-symmetrical posture of which could not be ignored. The first of these events, an exhibition titled “Le Mouvement des images. Art, cinéma,” which was designed and curated by art historian Philippe-Alain Michaud, aimed to *revisit* pieces from the collections of the Musée national d’art moderne in light of forms and “thoughts on cinema” – a light both real and virtual, literal and metaphorical. The exhibition aimed to confront the following question: how, and to what extent, may it be said that “the cinema” (insert as many quotation marks as necessary here) more or less subterraneously has informed, fed, influenced, worked through, inspired, and irrigated work (paintings, sculptures, photography, architecture, design, installations, performances, videos) by a number of artists of the 20th century whose categorization “on the side of cinema” was not necessarily evident (Matisse, Picasso, Barnett Newman, Frank Stella, Bustamante, Robert Longo, Chris Burden, and Wolfgang Laib, to name a few). The question – fascinating, open, bold – revolves around four structuring configurations, defined as four “components of cinema” (the run of the film in the camera or the projector, projection itself, narration, and montage) and is obviously very symptomatic of this “cinema effect” to which I refer. The exhibition was accompanied by a retrospective of experimental films, older as well as more recent, which also belong to the museum’s collections and whose screenings were programmed thematically according to the same configurations. At more or less the same time at the other end of the Centre Pompidou – and it was not clear whether this was intentional or coincidental – another exhibition, much anticipated and somewhat disappointing, was featured. Entirely designed and developed by Jean-Luc Godard (with the assistance of Dominique Païni), it was to be titled “Collage(s) de France. Archéologie du cinéma, d’après JLG” in reference to/reverence for Godard’s long-time fantasy

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of an appointment to the Collège de France. The exhibition was eventually renamed “Voyage(s) en utopie, Jean-Luc Godard, 1946-2006. À la recherche d’un théorème perdu.” This filmmaker’s exhibition, the scenographic continuation of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, is entirely structured as a huge installation, dreamed and left unfinished, a kind of cacophonous construction site full of traces and scattered fragments, bits of texts, images, and sounds (cinema, painting, literature, music) presented in every possible way (models as a series and even as a mise en abyme, more or less miniaturized screens in all positions, multiple reproductions, abandoned pieces, etc.). The whole organizes a sort of collage of ruins out of a vision of cinema that is at once poetic, meta-physical, and geopolitical, and crossed by its countless relations to art. Here again the exhibition is accompanied by a complete theatrical retrospective of films by (and on, and with) the author. All in all, then, two major exhibitions, almost simultaneously exhibited in the same major location, one that symbolizes art, each echoing the other like two sides of the same layered issue, that of the complex relations between cinema and contemporary art. Put schematically: on the one hand, cinema in art, on the other hand, art in cinema. Art as cinema, and cinema as art. Which is to say: “the cinema, contemporary art.” It is the comma in that phrase that matters here, because it plays a pivotal role between “cinema” and “contemporary art” and leaves the link between the two poles open in all directions.

So let me repeat (and this is nothing new, dating back as it does to the mid-1990s): the world of contemporary art is increasingly marked by the insistent presence of what could be called a “cinema effect” both far-reaching and superficial, often monumental, fetishistic even, occasionally poetic, sometimes intelligent, and possibly sensible. At any rate, this “cinema effect” is extremely diversified, takes multiple forms, and operates at all levels (institutional, artistic, theoretical, or critical). What I would like to try and do in this simple introductory presentation is to lay things out. Not analyze this or that particular aspect or throw myself into this or that individual approach (by a museum, an exhibition, an artist, an oeuvre). Rather, I only want to deal with this “cinema effect” as a global phenomenon: to adopt a panoramic, categorical perspective, on the one hand, positing a framework and identifying the main forms of this phenomenon; and on the other hand, to offer a few thoughts on the historical and aesthetic causes and stakes it seems to entail. This is an introductory text that sets up the context, in a way.¹

Exhibition Cinema? Post-cinema? Third Cinema? A Matter of Territory, Identity, Legitimization, Power, Gain, and Loss

First, on an institutional (or socio-institutional) level – on which I will not dwell – the pervasive resonance of this phenomenon, its omnipresence even, asks questions both from cinema and from art. Questions of (respective) places. Questions which I will not take so much as questions “of trend” (trendy) as questions as to “the world of art.” From the moment when, 15 years ago, almost every major biennale (Venice, dokumenta, and others), every museum (of every size, from the Centre Pompidou to the MAC in the small Belgian city of Liège), every art center (such as the Villa Arson in Nice, Le Fresnoy in Tourcoing, Le Consortium in Dijon), and every more or less “trendy” art gallery started systematically featuring exhibitions or works involving “the cinema” in one way or another in its programming, it became evident that the stakes went beyond works and approaches to include territories. It seems to me that these are issues of territories (and therefore of a cartography of arts and of geo-strategy), that is, issues of identity (of the cinema and of art) as well as reciprocal legitimation – and thus, of symbolic power.

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Speaking of the exhibition of works involving “the cinema” in one way or another calls for quotation marks, so uncertain are identities these days, with mixes being the rule, sowing doubt and spreading confusion on the question of the “nature” of phenomena attended to. For one of the central points of the problem is there: is what we see in exhibitions (still) really “cinema”? Is it cinema as it “migrated,” as it has been said, leaving the darkness of “its” movie theaters for the much brighter rooms of the museum? And, if that is the case, what for, to what end? Or is it cinema which has been diverted, disowned, transformed, metamorphosed? Into what? Is it a “beyond” or an “after” of cinema, as if cinema no longer was? Critics, ever prompt to react, or dramatize, have in fact come up with various terms to refer to it: I seem to remember, for instance, that Jean-Christophe Royoux was the first to use the expression “exhibition cinema” in the texts published in the periodical *Omnibus* (the expression was reused for a while by several other critics or institutions, from Régis Durand to Françoise Parfait, from *Art Press* to *Art Forum*, from the Venice Biennale to the Kassel dokumenta, before it was dropped). The phenomenon was also talked of as “post-cinema,” which associated it with that of rampant digitization, the DVD market, and the distribution of films over the Internet. Pascale Cassagnau prefers the expression “troisième cinéma,” literally, “third cinema.”² And the list goes on... Exhibition cinema, post-cinema: labels do not matter. The issue raised is clearly that of the identity or nature of “the cinema,” an *assumed* nature which proves or appears to be hypothetical (there where it felt self-assured, solid in its specificity), a *nature* which is now

called into question, relativized, shaken, transformed, betrayed perhaps, not to say fast disappearing (the cinema, a “vanishing art”?). This uncertainty with regard to identity is obviously fundamental on a theoretical level (and could be examined in the Deleuzian terms of “lines of deterritorialization”), but also at the level of institutions: it has implications for what Bourdieu called symbolic legitimization: in these transfers and translations, in these migrations and mixes, which stands to gain and which stands to lose, between cinema and contemporary art? And to gain or to lose *what*, exactly? A place in the sun? The gates of heaven? A descent into hell? What does each of these entities (art, cinema) bring to or take away from the other? In which direction has the balance of power settled at this point? Which of the two legitimizes or vouches for the other? Which one dissolves or gets lost in stretching to such an extent? Could cinema find rejuvenation in the museum, a youthful effect both positive and innovative, a noble sublimation for its ignoble (popular and commercial) origin? Or might it be a sign of weariness, flagging, exhaustion on the part of “the art of the 20th century,” so viscerally tied to the idea of theatrical exhibition and its ritual, suddenly incapable, at the beginning of the 21st century, of finding a place to rest, to settle, of finding which way to turn in order to survive while diversifying itself? And could contemporary art, which was sometimes depicted as somewhat expressionless, abstract, and even abstruse, desiccated or drained of its substance, be given some degree of reality, embodiment, life, soul, breath, sound, and fury thanks to the arrival of photographic images in movement, light, and sound? Or on the contrary, has it lost itself and its bearings to the point of trying to hang on to any cheap spectacular effect to pretend it is alive? And are these changes in location of a symbolic nature, or are they a matter of sociology, of audiences? Is it an economic question involving markets and market shares? Who loses, who gains, and what is lost or gained? I am not going to proceed further on this line of thought, but the phenomenon should certainly also be questioned in these terms, and a doctoral thesis on the subject would be much anticipated.

The Spectator and the Question of the Apparatus

On an artistic level, on which I will elaborate in more detail, this phenomenon of a “cinema effect” clearly opens extremely diverse perspectives.

First, in aesthetic terms, and to expand on what has just been said, I should point out that this emergence of “exhibition cinema” has also taken place over a background of changing *apparatuses*. It thus raises the issue of the place of spectators: as images left “their” good old dark theaters to be exhibited in the rooms of art museums, a whole series of parameters on the “specific” modes

of reception of these images shifted, and with them a host of questions on the “nature” of each of them appeared. For instance, what happens (for the film spectator) in the move from the large, communal dark theater, where everything disappears into obscurity for maximum and exclusive concentration by all upon the rectangle of the screen, to a more individualized vision, often on several simultaneous screens, and in a brighter environment for the film in the whiteness of the museum space? Is it possible to see an image in the same way when it is projected in light as when it is projected in darkness? In what way may this change dilute the effect of absorption and fusion of the collective spectator? Does it contribute to transforming him/her into an isolated, divided, wandering subject? What happens with the change from an immobile, seated position in the movie theater, to the mobile, upright posture of the passing visitor in the exhibition? Can the hypnotized spectator become a distanced *flâneur*? What is experienced in the passage from the standard duration imposed by the single uninterrupted run of the film to more random modes of vision, often fragmented and repetitive (the loop), of images that are always there, that may be left aside and retrieved at will? Does the captive of temporal duration in the movie theater find freedom in the exhibition space? Is it a shift from the singular to the repetitive? Conversely, what is the consequence for the museum when lights have to be dimmed and spectators have to feel their way along in a darkened room? How should sound circulate when it cannot be located? What are the sensorial implications of the exhibition of a projected, luminous image, as immaterial as it is ephemeral, in a large format and in movement, poles apart from the object-images (photography, painting) which could play into classic perception in museums? How to guide the visitor through the narrative display of images telling a story? And the list of questions goes on... This whole set of modifications and interrogations deeply destabilizes what could until then be considered as established categories. The very idea of “cinema” or “art” (in the sense of work of art) finds itself strongly relativized. And institutional interrogations prove to be aesthetic as well.

A Generational Phenomenon

What is more, when it comes to individuals, we simply have to admit that there is a generational phenomenon: over roughly the past fifteen years, a whole array of artists seems to have taken over the object of “cinema” or the thought on that object. They have placed it at the center of their practice, as though the point was to revive, to (re)animate the world of contemporary art by providing it with a life and an imaginary; if it is not new, it is at least rich – historically,

culturally, and aesthetically. This is an objective fact, if only quantitatively. And if it does not represent a “school” per se, it is at least a movement that may almost be called *generational* (with some notable exceptions such as Anthony McCall or Michael Snow, whose pioneering works date back to the late 1960s or the early 1970s). At any rate, the names of these artists, many of whom are prominent on the current international art scene, are well known: Douglas Gordon, Pierre Huyghe, Pierre Bismuth, Stan Douglas, Steve McQueen, Mark Lewis, Doug Aitken, Pipilotti Rist, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Sam Taylor-Wood, Tacita Dean, Rainer Oldendorf, Philippe Parreno, Dominique Gonzales-Foerster, etc. To these now established figures, an extraordinarily high number of younger artists should be added: lesser known, to be sure, they still massively contribute to the flood we are facing today. This emergence of a generation, it seems to me, cannot be thought about separately from its counterpart in cinema. For at the same time, but in the opposite direction, many (established) filmmakers are turning to the field of art to propose works, most often in the form of installations, sometimes new (made especially for a specific exhibition) but not necessarily, as many appear as (more or less original) spatializations of their films or worlds designed for museums and galleries. These are filmmakers’ installations: those, now well known, by Chantal Akerman (who over the last few years has made them a personal specialty); Chris Marker’s historical and original realizations, from his *Zapping Zone* at the Centre Pompidou first presented in 1990 to his recent *Prelude: The Hollow Men* at the MOMA and the magnificent *Silent Movie*; Agnès Varda’s developing installations (her interesting *Triptyque de Noirmoutier* and the whole exhibition “L’île et elle”); not to mention the various, and more or less creative attempts by Johan van der Keuken, Abbas Kiarostami, Atom Egoyan, Peter Greenaway, the association between Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi, and of course Godard’s *Voyages en utopie*, already mentioned. As it appears from the names above, many of these installations were made by an often older generation than that of exhibition cinema: Varda, Marker, and Godard could be their parents and, in a way, they are.

Passing on Historical Images: Experimental Cinema and Video Art

Finally, to fully map things out, it should also be said that exactly midway between these two worlds between these artists-working-with-the-cinema and these filmmakers-thinking-of-themselves-as-artists-or-trying-their-hand-at-artwork, there is the whole world of experimental filmmakers and video artists: small yet intense, teeming with activity, diverse, and open. They are the

ones *passing things on* between the two worlds with which we are concerned. And they each have their history and their autonomy, which I cannot possibly recount here.³ With respect to classic theatrical screenings, experimental film clearly instituted “the installation” (in a general, *expanded* sense, to use Gene Youngblood’s term) as another form of existence for cinema: projection on several screens, on uneven surfaces, in space, etc. And, just as clearly, video introduced the large-format moving image in the world of contemporary art galleries and museums – especially as it moved from “video sculpture” (with the monitor, a multiplied, piled-up, aligned image-cube, as its totem) to “video projection” (on a large screen, in digital quality) in the late 1980s. As historical and aesthetic agents in the passages between art and cinema, experimental cinema and video art put into play the very forms of the encounter between these two major fields.

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The Main Figures of the Cinema Effect: A First Attempt at Categorization

Staying within the perspective I chose, setting the scene by way of introduction, I would like to try and describe a few of the major modes of this cinema effect, simply and with examples to illustrate my points. This does not involve a systematic typology, nor does it stem from a will to be exhaustive or a desire to freeze what is moving, but rather to scan briefly, without a detailed analysis, and with a bit of rationality, the extremely diverse terrain with which we are dealing. Accordingly, I would like to go briefly through four figures which represent typical forms the relation between cinema and contemporary art can take, four figures of the cinema effect among many other possibilities: variations on the idea of *reuse*, starting from the most literal (or explicit, or direct) instances to move towards the most metaphorical (implicit, indirect).

Reuse as a Principle

Reuse is undoubtedly the most self-evident notion. The primary meaning of this principle, as its name indicates, points to a gesture – an effective gesture which constitutes each piece of art: the material and physical borrowing of filmic object(s). Reuse as a gesture may take many forms: recycling, reproduction, sampling, citation, reference, inspiration, reappropriation, absorption, diversion, reversion, transformation, distortion, disfiguration, etc. Reuses may be integral or partial, faithful or altered, direct or indirect... They are what first comes to mind in discussions on the presence of a cinema effect in con-

temporary art. Yet this is not to say that they are the most explicit or immediately visible, or that what is at stake with them is simple or transparent — far from it. Several singular forms of reuse may be identified, whose variations, following a certain progression, illustrate the principle.

The Exhibited Film⁴

This is somewhat the matrix of the phenomenon, and a primary example immediately comes to mind in that area: Douglas Gordon's famous 1993 *24 Hour Psycho*. When he appropriated Hitchcock's film to turn it into a video projection on a large screen in the middle of a museum gallery, Gordon *reused* the movie *Psycho* (forcing it out of the cinema) to *exhibit* it (and not just project it) in a space and an institution devoted to art. He even exhibited it as a whole (in its totality) but did not preserve its *integrity*, subjecting the film to a fundamental distortion by using extreme slow motion. Indeed, the complete projection of the film in Gordon's version spans 24 hours instead of the standard hour and a half. This experiment on the duration of reception, the patience of the spectator, and the rules of the institution, still fully belongs to a performative inspiration quite characteristic of the 1970s. Most of all, though, the slowness of the projection completely metamorphoses the *visual sensation* of the film, (re)discovered in the minutest details, in the plasticity of each of its shots and decomposed movements. The experience proves as plastic as temporal: *Psycho*, the cult film we thought we knew by heart, feels as though it had never been seen before (not like *this*, in any case). Each gesture, each facial expression, each action finds itself almost analyzed, "contemplatively scrutinized." A thousand unsuspected, invisible facets are thus revealed in and through the thickness of the slow motion. In that regard, it would be interesting to compare this piece by Douglas Gordon with another reuse of the same Hitchcock film, Gus Van Sant's *shot by shot remake*, in which *Psycho* operates less as an "exhibited film" than as an "installed film" within another film. This is a new way of treating the old question of the remake in the light of practices of contemporary art, and from that standpoint, Van Sant is probably the most interesting filmmaker today: *Gerry* or *Elephant* could be viewed as formal responses in film to questions raised by contemporary art.

Many other cases could be mentioned to illustrate this figure of the "exhibited film," if only another installation by the same Douglas Gordon, *Déjà vu* (2000), not to mention his "impossible" *Five Year Drive-by* (1995): John Ford's *The Searchers* slowed down to the point of reaching a virtual screening time of five years, the time of the diegesis! Or the triple projection of the same Hollywood film noir, Rudolf Maté's *D.O.A.*, on three large screens juxtaposed edge

to edge. These three projections differ from one another by only the slightest temporal unit (one image/second). Maté's film thus runs at a speed of 23 images/second on the first screen, at 24 on the second, 25 on the third. Small causes, great effects. This minuscule variation in speed, imperceptible at first, gradually comes to undermine the synchrony of the three projections until the film splits into almost three different films and proves challenging to connect back to itself.

Another recurring manner of exhibiting a film in its integrality but not in its integrity consists in separating the soundtrack from the image. Various artists have more or less done away with the visible part of an original film, keeping only the continuity of its sound. This is the case of some of Pierre Huyghe's pieces such as *Dubbing*, which presents the viewer with a still, uninterrupted shot lasting 90 minutes of the whole crew of dubbers facing the camera and looking at a screen off the frame as they work on a film never seen but the French dialogues of which are heard throughout (and read thanks to the text appearing at the bottom of the image). Pierre Bismuth's work (*Post Script/ The Passenger*, 1996, or *The Party*, 1997, for example) also plays with the gap between sound and image, presenting transcriptions of these works by Antonioni and Blake Edwards typewritten in real time by a secretary who hears the films without seeing them.

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What emerges from all these experiences, in the end, is a “museum version” of a film almost in the sense of the “multiple versions” known in film history. What is at stake is the film, the possibility of its exhibition, and how this possibility transforms, not so much the film itself as its reception and perception by the spectator. Each piece working towards a version of a film that may be exhibited proves a meta-perceptive analytical experience where the act of seeing images is itself questioned. To see an “exhibited film” is not to see it again, it is to see it (or hear it) differently, and therefore wonder about this alterity.

Cited Films

Things are very different with this second figure. Far from attempting to exhibit a film, to give spectators a (more or less altered) version of it to offer a new viewing experience, it seeks to look about anywhere, to tap into the infinite material of film, of all kinds of films, from different corpuses, whether heterogeneous or established, to take fragments, bits, selected passages, to piece together something “new.” This is primarily a work of investigation, search, excavation, and secondarily a work of selection, cutting, carving out. And lastly, it is a work of re-organization, assembly, montage. Finding, disfig-

uring, (re-)configuring. Reuse here is less a gesture of presentation (exhibiting) than a gesture of de-/re-construction. The operation does not aim for an original object (the matrix film), but rather for a more general or transversal film imaginary.

Here again an established and sanctioned practice, which has placed this question at the center of its approach, immediately comes to mind: *found footage*. Found footage films lie precisely on the threshold between experimental cinema and exhibition practices, since they may be seen at screenings as well as installations in the spaces of art. When filmmaker-artists such as those from the contemporary Austrian school (Martin Arnold, Matthias Müller, Claude Girardet, or Peter Tscherkassky, for example) revisit cinema, and more particularly Hollywood's narrative cinema, they make films or installations which do not just "attack" the original filmic material (this physical dismembering is very pronounced with Peter Tcherkassky for instance, but also, though differently, with Martin Arnold): they also "enter" the films as cultural objects and work on the imaginary or the ideology for which these serve as vehicles, in order to give a sometimes critical, sometimes poetic, version of them. *Home Stories* (Matthias Müller, 1990) focuses on the stereotyped narrative and figurative postures of the 1950s Hollywood melodrama. Martin Arnold's *Alone* (1998) and *Pièce touchée* (1989) take apart – rather humorously – the gestural or postural unconscious of bodies and characters buried in the folds of ordinary images. *Outer Space* or *Dreamwork* (Peter Tscherkassky, 1999 and 2000) reinvent specifically figural modes of narration out of the same original material. In the same general sense, one could even include the films of Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi (all films since *Du Pôle à l'équateur*), Bill Morrison (*Footprints*), Al Razutis and his *Visual Essays*, Mark Lewis and his "cinema in parts," and so on. All these operations play with the flesh of film images, take cinema apart and put it back together to draw new or renewed ideas or sensations from it. The installation-like presentation of these films is certainly not always a priority, but each film may in itself be considered quite exactly as a specific installation of fragments from other films. Either it assumes specific dimensions, as with the set-up of Chris Marker's 1995 *Silent Movie*, with its five video screens stacked into a column and its random program of infinite combinations of shots produced out of the images saved on the five video discs; or the arrangement on three screens placed in a row, one in front of the other in a kind of memorial stratification, as in Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi's *La Marcia dell'uomo*. Or of course Godard's whole exhibition-installation at the Centre Pompidou, *Voyage(s) en utopie*, a boundless construction site of multiple citations.

What is left of this whole tradition of artworks comprising "cited films" is the general idea that cinema is unmistakably and par excellence the imaginary

of images that haunts our minds and occupies contemporary visual memory, whether we like it or not. The film image is at once material and specter, the hint at the fiction of an image, the ghostly flesh always there, strong and fragile at the same time. All these installations keep reiterating it, on a critical, ironic, denunciatory, or iconoclastic mode: the cinema, films were, by the end of the twentieth century, the backdrop for our relation to images, and as a consequence to the world. Our visual thought is a “cinematographic” one.

The Reconstructed Film

This third form still relates to the figures of reuse, yet with some distance (from literalness), insofar as it does not involve the material reuse of an image, but a reuse of sorts in the second degree, the creative reuse of the formal idea of a film, that is, a *reconstruction* (in the sense of the reconstruction of a crime). The reconstructed film may be to the (original) film, the matrix, what the tableau vivant is to the painting. Remade (a remake), with (more or less) new actors and in the spirit of a connection to the object of reference, the new film plays with all possible dialectics between faithfulness and inaccuracy, reproduction and transformation, sameness and otherness. These games of similarity and dissimilarity, in which the share of invention always vies with the share of reconstruction, are at the center of the operation – and at the center of the works relying on this principle. Here are a few examples.

Pierre Huyghe's *L'Ellipse* (1998) is a three-screen installation that “creates” a sequence shot “missing” in Wim Wenders' film *The American Friend* (1977). The screens on the left and on the right successively show a sequence of the film in two shots which originally produced an ellipsis. On the left, the character played by Bruno Ganz is shown in Paris, in a Left Bank apartment; on the right, the same character can be seen in a different place, this time on the Right Bank; between the two, Wim Wenders' film skipped what happened thanks to a cut. Twenty years after the shooting of Wenders' film, Pierre Huyghe (re)shot the ellipsis and exhibited it: he asked the same actor, Bruno Ganz, 20 years older, to walk from one place to the other again, and filmed an eight-minute sequence shot of him in 1998 as he crossed the Pont de Grenelle. The sequence shot is projected on the central screen between Wenders' two successive shots, the delayed reconstruction of an interstitial absence. A man walking – and thinking – in an interval between two dated shots, crossing a bridge to bridge between two places and two times. A memory going back and forth in the present, in the aftermath of the memory of a film with a hole in it. A spatial gap reconstructed in the production of a temporal gap.

The Third Memory (2000), another work by Pierre Huyghe, is a reconstruc-

tive arrangement comprising three layers. “Originally,” as far back as sedimentation allows to go, there is a story which made the news in 1972: a stickup that went wrong that involved hostages at a Brooklyn bank. American television had already shot part of the action live (showing the police overdoing it as they surrounded the place). Then there was a famous film, Sidney Lumet’s 1975 *Dog Day Afternoon*, which “staged” the story of the heist, *interpreting* it in a fictional reconstruction with Al Pacino playing the part of the hold-up man. Finally, Pierre Huyghe not only *reused* this double visual material, which serves as a counterpoint in his work: he also carried out a meticulous reconstruction of the attack of the bank in a studio, with simplified sets, extras standing in for the employees of the bank and the police, and most of all – this is where the whole project started – the actual aged hold-up man “in person”: John Wojtowicz, playing himself. He had served his sentence, had been released from jail, and “(re)enacted the scene” for Huyghe in a way in which he could attempt to “give the real version of facts” while taking part in a reconstruction almost 30 years later. He is thus both the person and the character in this three-tiered arrangement; he is the actor and the main protagonist (which he really was), the author (in the full sense of the word), the director (he gives directions, directs extras), and even the distanced commentator after the fact, criticizing Lumet and Pacino’s “inaccurate” version of his story.

Constanze Ruhm’s work, with her project *X Character* and more particularly *X Characters/RE(hers)AL* (2003/04) and *X Nana/Subroutine* (2004), also proceeds from this logic of reenactment, but along still other perspectives. In short, the idea is to start anew from relatively well-known characters in fiction films who are already part of our memory as spectators. The Nana of the second example comes from Godard’s *Vivre sa vie*; the seven female characters of the first example come from different films and filmmakers: Alma from Bergman’s *Persona*, Bree from Alan Pakula’s *Klute*, Giuliana from Antonioni’s *Red Desert*, Hari from Tarkovsky’s *Solaris*, Laura from Kershner’s *Eyes of Laura Mars*, Rachael from Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*, etc. The seven women, none of whom physically looks like her model, find themselves waiting in a stylized airport. Ruhm approaches these characters as belonging to a new fiction but with a cinematographic past and lived experience, an identity *already there*. These complex works involving films, photographs, books, and installations are very open mixtures of dialogues invented in contemporary situations and in more or less pregnant filmic imaginaries. They smoothly and subtly associate proximity and distance, resemblance and dissemblance, reconstruction and invention.

Formal Figures of a Virtual Cinema

The movement away from literalness continues with this new category of figures in material reuse, for here the relation to cinema plays out, not at the level of one or several films in particular, but at the more “abstract” or general level of “filmic forms” such as the shot/reverse shot, the eyeline match or the match on action, crosscutting or parallel editing... All these forms, which shaped film language, serve – not without some degree of adaptation – as models for the mise-en-scène of many artists’ installations, whose formal debt to all these established figures in cinematographic writing is obvious. One recurring principle in this area is the transposition of temporal forms of cinema (notably the whole dynamic drawn from editing) into a *spatial arrangement* in the exhibition. The genuine fascination of post-cinema artists for the form of the multiple screen may be understood in this way. The co-presence of several screens in the gallery according to specific arrangements may be thought of as a kind of direct transposition in space of the figures of editing in cinema. Countless works cultivate not only the reference to forms, but also to typical filmic themes which are as many *topoi*, basic motifs, standards in cinema. For instance, many installations set up scenes of meals at a restaurant, domestic fights, encounters, declarations of love, escapes, etc., between two protagonists, which cinema has accustomed us to seeing in shot/reverse shot, crosscutting, matches on action, sometimes even crossing the axis of action or linking up certain angles or gestures. Many scenes presented in multiple-screen setups may be found in the work of Stan Douglas, Sam Taylor Wood, Steve McQueen, Doug Aitken, Rainer Oldendorf, and many others. The shot/reverse shot of cinema becomes a simultaneous projection on two screens facing each other, side by side, or at a right angle reproducing the positions of cameras during shooting. Generally, what film delivers in the succession of shots, the exhibition stages in the spatial simultaneity of its screens, playing with all possible “matching” effects *but* doing so in space (visual rhymes, symmetry, inversion, reversal, etc.). This is not without evoking the vertical montage (as opposed to horizontal montage) brought up by Abel Gance in relation to all the visual arrangements which his triple screen made possible, according to him.

This logic eventually raises the issue of the narrative, approached frontally by some artists (Doug Aitken, Steve McQueen, Pipilotti Rist, or Eija-Liisa Ahtila, for instance). Is it possible to tell a story in (and through) the space of installation, and if so, how? Multiple screens, in that they spatialize the succession of shots, may be used in this way by adjusting quite precisely to the very progression of visitors in the exhibition. Their path, moving from screen to screen, then functions as a shot by shot progression in the story told by the

film. The walk articulates narration, the figure of the narrator is the figure of a walker: I walk, therefore I am (the story). The path may be linear (though that is rather rare), it is more often than not complex, multiple, fragmented, labyrinthine, it may be open or closed, fast or slow, etc. Here visiting the exhibition amounts to “seeing a movie,” and the (immobile, seated...) spectator turns into a *flâneur*, in Benjamin’s sense.

It thus becomes apparent that this takes us into areas where the question of cinema in contemporary art works becomes increasingly secondary, virtual, abstract, implicit, and metaphorical. It is indeed about an *effect*. And Philippe-Alain Michaud’s exhibition at the Centre Pompidou, mentioned at the beginning of this text, marks to some degree its end point. What “effects cinema” in some of the works presented in “Le Mouvement des images” often has to do with a sort of extreme virtuality: it may be a gesture, a posture, a form, a frame, a movement, a detail – sometimes a mere play on words, even, as with the thin *film* of dry milk in Wolfgang Laib’s milkstones. The cinema effect is there indeed, haunting, as it does, our ways of seeing.

NOTES

- 1 For more information, analyses, or ideas, see the many published articles (notably in *Omnibus* and *Art Press*), catalogues (from everywhere), and books dealing with the subject, four of which deserve particular attention: Bellour (1990); Païni (2001); Parfait (2001); Cassagnau (2006).
- 2 Translator's note: this has of course nothing to do with the Third Cinema that emerged in Latin America in the 1960s.
- 3 See Chris Wahl's chapter 1 in this same volume.
- 4 Translator's note: the English term for the theatrical screening of films, *exhibition*, is obviously the same term as that used in the context of the display of art works in museums and galleries. In French, on the other hand, the term *exposition*, when applied to film, assumes full significance in that theatrical presentation is referred to as *exploitation*.

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9.2 EXHIBITING IMAGES IN MOVEMENT

9.2.1 EXHIBITING/EDITING: DOMINIQUE PAÏNI AND PROGRAMMING AT THE CINÉMATHEQUE FRANÇAISE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTENARY

Stéphanie-Emmanuelle Louis

“After all, isn’t programming also laying shots and sequences end to end with dramatic purposes in mind? To program is to *edit*.” (Païni, 1992 : 30)

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Ever since the 1930s, cinémathèques have historically been the places where museums present films: in preserving films, cinémathèques inscribe their exhibition within a heritage network. They thus systematize the re-release of the films and foster their anachronistic re-appropriation by audiences. Still, this practice of exhibition began to be approached as an issue in and of itself only in the late 1980s, in a context of transformation of the cinematographic and audiovisual landscape through the question of programming or, put very literally, of the organization of programs.¹

It was Dominique Païni who, from his French base – the Cinémathèque française, which he headed from 1992 to 2000 – championed the debate through many texts and interviews which historicized the practice of programming and explored its contemporary implications. Païni probed the legacy of Henri Langlois, whose programs at the Cinémathèque française between 1936 and 1977 remained legendary. In that regard, his interpretation in terms of collage programming seems rather widely shared in the world of cinémathèques (Rauger, 1995; Claes, 1995). However, Dominique Païni has put it into perspective using the practice of filmmakers, including, notably, that of Jean-Luc Godard, which has apparently met with more reservations. This theoretical reflection steeped in practice uses analogy as an exploratory process: programming is akin to editing, an ontologically cinematographic manipulation. Let us note in passing that, as far as we know, there is no text by Langlois that supports this reading.

This last aspect, which makes Dominique Païni’s approach singular, seems particularly revealing of the cinema effect “which [haunts] our ways of seeing” (Dubois, 2006: 25). Following the chronological landmarks given by Philippe Dubois, I will highlight the generational roots of a perspective which tends to take over “the object of ‘cinema’ or the thought on that object” (Dubois, 2006: 18) to contemplate the exhibition of objects which are part of a cinematographic heritage. In the end, a new historical perspective for the cinema effect may emerge.

Cinema in the Age of Museums

1992, the year when Dominique Païni was appointed director of the Cinémathèque française, was marked by an increased mobilization for cinema in France, with the centenary of the invention fast approaching. Cinema, so it went, should be considered a cultural good to be preserved and passed on as the heritage of a community – hence its entrance into the museum. To reconsider the legacy of the Cinémathèque française is imperative, as it has been the museum of cinema in France and the issue of the exhibition of the films featured in the collections has proved an impetus as much as a constraint throughout its history.²

The new director considered the centenary as a pivotal moment, arguing that “cinema has been conquered as an art, it has retroacted on other arts, it is time to demand that the Cinémathèque become a genuine Museum” (Jousse, Tesson, and Toubiana, 1992: 86). To introduce cinema into the museum thus associated two points of view: one attempting to define art within cinema, another considering it within a general artistic context. However, its collections distinguish the Cinémathèque from museums of art in that they mostly comprise films, that is, works unfolding in time, in addition to the specific paradigm of their presentation, projection. This primary mission is the focus here.

While the question of programming had been a strong interest of Dominique Païni’s since the 1970s, from his experiences leading discussions in film clubs, then as the owner of repertoire movie theaters,³ his appointment at the Cinémathèque française inaugurated a new stage in his reflection. His formative years had been characterized by a constant commitment to the defense of the specificity of filmic objects, so that each could be acknowledged as a “signifying practice” (Païni, 1971: 65). He had also advocated adapted spaces to valorize these objects, “gallery-theaters” (Païni, 1984 : VI) or “showcase theatres.” (Le Péron, Toubiana, 1984 : 45) Programming gradually emerged as a central element in this arrangement of relations, where films find their spectators and thereby become cinematographic works.

The new direction of the Cinémathèque française thus constituted an end point to this aspiration to a genuine presentation of cinema in a museum space – in a new environment, however, since programming had to be founded on a collection of film archives. This was not self-evident, because historiographic production, rather than simply being echoed (as at the time of the Studio 43⁴), now had to be put into perspective through the selection of films from an extremely diverse collection which did not only include masterpieces.

In accordance with its mission as a museum, the Cinémathèque participates in the exploration of film heritage. As a consequence, programming

cannot be limited to an appendix of history: it constitutes in itself a particular form of writing. As it contributes to developing cinematographic taste, the Cinémathèque also proposes artistic hierarchies, even temporary ones, a practice which encourages comparisons and invites re-evaluations. The institution thus represents the place where a critical outlook on cinema has historically been able to exist. Programming may indeed be a way to think cinema solely through films.

Programming – Editing

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Confronted with the collections, the “cinephile-turned-curator” found perceptive stakes likely to give direction to his heritage mission: “to speak of these films, to describe them, or more specifically, to describe the impressions they produced in me, appeared as the right method to contemplate their place within programming” (Païni, 1996 : 56). The act of programming was mostly informed by the knowledge of corpuses, yet it also rested on the subjectivity of the point of view. Moving beyond the conspicuousness produced by the exhibition of an old object in the museum then became possible, to enter a critical interaction between films, spectators, and programmer through a sensualist approach.

While film production may also be approached from a sociological standpoint, as was for instance the case at the Cinémathèque de Toulouse,⁵ the project advanced by Païni had more to do with an iconology. The method consisted in “putting films side by side, finding the origin of a film image and tracing its destiny from film to film, from film to text” (Païni, 1995 : 29). Programming in a cinémathèque could thus amount to a “film aesthetic akin to a montage forcing thematic commonalities, reducing stylistic indifferences, and joining images and thought” (Païni, 1995 : 29). Consequently, the arrangement of filmic objects became not only a visual composition, but an iconological one as well.

Countless artistic references support the closeness between programming and editing, or montage; they also seem to introduce an analogical slippage towards a plastic conception of programming where a cinema-effect is expressed. Duchamp explained how “[the act of] showing made the work” (Païni, 1992 : 23). Cage and Boulez epitomized the practice of collage and the connections between works. Barthes, with *A Lover’s Discourse: Fragments*, invited to “teach the history of a literature, no longer stemming from a chronological and evolutionist conception, but derived from an artistic project privileging intuitive associations and experimental comparisons, in other words a history of literature which would itself be a writing” (Païni, 1992 : 26). From one

end of this gallery of “portraits of artists as programmers” to the other, one found Henri Langlois and Jean-Luc Godard, whose respective oeuvres were compared to montages of attractions, in an explicit reference to Eisenstein.

From the Cine-Father to the B-Movie Filmmaker⁶

The analysis of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*⁷ may be qualified as heuristic in the thought on programming developed by Païni: “such is Godard’s project today, as Langlois’s yesterday: to use passages to free themselves from certain constraints (one of which, the availability of films, is not the least). It is about covering a history of cinema thanks to the remains of cinema, ‘scrap films,’ if I may call them that, found in the garbage, salvaged from the apocalyptic history of an uncertain art which Langlois described as almost devastated and which a certain type of historian, comparable to a ragman, may write” (Païni, 1997 : 83).

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If these two manipulators of films meet as they bring into play an imaginary museum of cinema, Godard benefited from video as a technical tool for historical comparison, whereas the ephemerality of projection always set objective limits to Langlois’s impulses.⁸ Still, like Godard’s, Langlois’s work comes down to “brutalizing films, twisting them, setting their signification ablaze, diverting them from the project of their author to reveal the madness in them – a madness repressed by Hollywood’s industrial and moral system, and which is exalted (exhaled) as soon as programming edits films together in a montage like that of Eisensteinian attractions and irreversibly turns categories and generic or stylistic labels upside down” (Païni, 1997 : 179). A study of screening schedules⁹ shows a method made of synchronous lines, comparisons, and juxtapositions tending towards cinematographic figurability; and where, in the end, “the association of films itself amounts to an image” (Païni, 1997: 173). On the scale of an evening, and more largely of a retrospective, programming heritage films thus becomes a signifying montage subject to the same constraint of temporal unfolding as a film.

The analogy between film and programming suggested by Dominique Païni – but never stated so literally by him – may help design the exhibition of films in cinemathèques. Its limitations are in the fact that professionals in film archives have not embraced it, which is why I propose, by way of conclusion and more generally, to question the historical context in which this interpretation appeared.

In the mid-1990s, the issue of showing the collections seemed to preoccupy museologists. In 1993 André Desvallées referred to the “know-how of exhibitions” as “expographie,” or “exhibition writing,” thus singling it out among

the many activities of museums (Desvallées, 1996 : 174). Dominique Païni's discourse should be read in the same climate of clarification in professional practices. One may wonder, then, whether the reference to cinema to explain programming in cinemathèques did not tend to legitimize the entrance of film into the museum in the eyes of rather reluctant cinephiles.

Clearly, however, this cinematic way of thinking about programming was steeped in a personal film culture nurtured on Bresson, Straub, and Godard, to mention but a few. This raises a more general question: could the consecration of cinema as part of the national heritage not also be translated in its re-appropriation as material for thought? Taking advantage of undeniable technological advances, contemporary artists, and exhibition places, through their respective practices, seem to have answered in the positive.

9.2.2 THE EXPANDED ARCHIVE: THE MINDFRAMES EXHIBITION

Claudia D'Alonzo

From 16 December 2006 to 18 March 2007, the ZKM – Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe (Germany) hosted the exhibition *MindFrames – Media Study at Buffalo 1973-1990*, curated by Woody Vasulka and Peter Weibel (Vasulka and Weibel, 2008). The exhibition presented works by some of the most important artists from the Department for Media Studies at Buffalo (New York University) who, through their teaching, contributed to making this a leading institution in the history of media art: James Blue, Tony Conrad, Hollis Frampton, Paul Sharits, Steina and Woody Vasulka, and Peter Weibel. *MindFrames* spanned 30 years, the time during which the department was under the direction of Gerald O'Grady. As the founder and lead figure at Buffalo, O'Grady created an interdisciplinary teaching structure based on the synergy between very different areas including technology, communication, art, and experimental cinema (Minkowski, 1978). The artists shown in the exhibition can be seen as pioneers exploring the relationship between art and technology, as demonstrated by their studies on techniques, tools and languages, as well as their theoretical research, developed in papers, conferences, and publications (Vasulka and Vasulka, 1992).

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MindFrames represents an important event in the media art field for two main reasons. First, the exhibition has brought the Buffalo Media Study's experiences into the museum context, through the presentation of a large number of works that had not previously been shown in a single display. This represents an important act of cultural memory and documentation. Second, *MindFrames* is an exemplary case of innovative media art exhibition design. As we shall see, the curatorial project has re-edited the specific features of "the digital database as symbolic form" into an exhibition, as identified by new media theorist Lev Manovich (Manovich, 2001:194). The choices made by the two curators deal with a complex ongoing debate, which aims at establishing modalities for bringing media art to the museum. Whilst the exhibition is not a final response to the numerous issues raised by this debate, it has certainly suggested some interesting new directions. These two focuses of *MindFrames* have been made possible thanks to a third one, represented by the *digitization* of the works. Indeed, a large part of the analogue works (film, video) has been transformed into digital. The following text aims to show how *MindFrames* represents an original example of media art exhibition.

Within his analysis of the transformation of audiovisual contents caused by the migration from analogue to digital media, the German media archae-

ologist Wolfgang Ernst highlights that the most significant consequence is not the re-activation of audiovisual cultural objects but the creation of relationships between those objects through hyperlinks. Indeed, one of the main functions of the digital archive is not to record each single file, but to establish logistic links between them. In the same way, the Net is not characterized by its contents but rather by the protocols of information exchange (Ernst, 2010: 4). The digitization process implemented on the *corpus* of *MindFrames* thus has transformed each document in an ontologically dynamic digital object, participatory and located in a network of relations. The filmic and analogue video materials in this exhibition have been transformed into digital data not only in order to preserve them from deterioration, but also to transform them into digital information, recorded onto a server, connected to the Internet and the exhibition space. This setup allows the audience access through different modalities inside the exhibition space as well as via an online platform, as we shall see. *MindFrames* makes the digital archive structure of complex relations a fruitful model for exhibiting media art: it encourages each spectator/user to ‘browse’ through the hyperlinks network, moving through the relationships of connected artworks and consulting the network in interactive ways.

The exhibition setup, designed by Woody Valuska and produced by Shinya Sato, divided the large space on the ground floor of the ZKM Media Museum into three concentric rings, including separate areas within them (Minkowski, 2007: 57). The outside ring was a large circular space accessible from various directions. It contained artworks by all the artists, mixed together. Along the ring, the audience could find several kind of works, mainly video wall projections but also various installations which had been redesigned especially for the exhibition: from the Vasulkas’ multichannel video matrix, Weibel’s video installations, and Woody Vasulka’s “interactive mechanical ambients” to Paul Sharits’ film projections. Besides the installations, the outside ring also contained a “galleria,” displaying a variety of paper documents and photographic material, as well as a film room, a video room, a documentary room, and a concert room, for audiovisual performances.

This variety of works faithfully represented the richness of personalities that characterized the Buffalo Media Study’s scene. The same function was performed by the *Grand View*, a large projection on three screens showing footage of many of the exhibition’s works. This screen was suspended in the center of the exhibition space that could be surveyed from the balcony on the second floor. The general overview from the first ring represented an exhaustive recognition of the languages and media experimentations that allowed the birth of what is now called media art.

From this collective space, the rest of the exhibition zoomed in on the work of each author: the audience had access to several small projection rooms ded-

icated to each artist, similar to black boxes, in which the works were projected on the walls. A circular room at the center of the exhibition was divided into eight media labs, one for each artist, showing a collection of works that aimed at increasing understanding of the individual artist. In this area, there were eight video jukeboxes, interactive workstations with a touch screen which allowed the viewer to select films or video artworks and archival video interviews with the artists. The whole audiovisual content – in total approximately 400 hours of film, video, documentary, and video interviews – were distributed into the exhibition spaces from a central server.

Three features that Woody Vasulka established as bases of the *MindFrames* project were fundamental in creating an exhibition of this kind. According to Vasulka, the whole exhibition should have been presented: first, in digital format; second, remotely controlled (thus delocalizing the connection between the exhibition and the actual artwork), and third, disseminated through the Internet using the OASIS Archive, which is a platform for the presentation and dissemination of audiovisual works and other documents independent of exhibition location, through the web.¹⁰ Using such an interactive, online interface, the single users (individuals, researchers, and general public) have access to an interlinking database metadata system, collecting documents available by institutions taking part in the project.

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The concept of the exhibition thus was that of a macroscopic database connecting the exhibition spaces of the ZKM in Karlsruhe to a server located in Cologne – a server which hosted the large number of audiovisual works/data. This method has never been applied to a media art exhibition. The OASIS platform is the element that has allowed the transposition of the exhibition process into an expanded online database access experience. The digital archive retains features described by Wolfgang Ernst: a relationship structure, represented in the exhibition by the net of hyperlinks connecting the documents; a dynamic nature, as represented by different access modalities; and interactivity, which is enabled through the exhibit's video jukeboxes.

Consequently, besides seeing *MindFrames* as an exhibition project, one should also analyze it as an innovative distribution model for digital cultural content. An apt reference for such an analysis is the definition of database as a cultural form, elaborated by Lev Manovich. Manovich defines the database not only as an organization of electronic data, but also as a cultural metaphor that has a determining role in the construction, registration, and spread of knowledge and contents in the digital era. Manovich's analysis shows how the technical procedures related to digital archiving are not just a media aspect but have important consequences for the intrinsic nature and dissemination of information: the computer ontology projects its consequences on the contemporary culture and society (Manovich, 2001:194). As I have already empha-

sized, *MindFrames* makes this essential shift from a technical realm into a cultural one visible, making the digitization and archiving processes useful models for designing the exhibition display.

In his discussion of the exhibition in the accompanying catalogue, John Minkowski acknowledges the exhibition's historical value but criticizes it for the possibilities of experience given to the audience. Minkowski states that the large number of works and documents presented in a way presents a limitation to the project: "Viewers may have been sated, gasping for breath, and at the same time frustrated at not being able to take it all in. After six days there, I still felt that I had only scratched the surface" (2007: 57). He thus indicated the impossibility of entirely observing the corpus of works and so to perceive the abundance of materials as an obstacle to interpretation. Minkowski here points out a weak spot of the exhibition, which, to refer once again to the database model of Manovich, we could call the subject of "interface."

One of the main repercussions that electronic document archiving produces on contemporary society is the requirement to design the ideal interface to reproduce information and elaborate access procedures. Manovich underlines that traditional cultures had little information but could find excellent interfaces for their diffusion in well-defined narrations such as myths and religions. On the contrary, the digital era is characterized by an information overload but still has not managed to develop satisfactory methods to interact with all these data. Once again, the main point is not the content in itself but the architecture of access to the data. This requires what Manovich has dubbed as *info-aesthetic*: a theoretical analysis of the aesthetic of access (Manovich, 2001: 193).

For these reasons, *MindFrames* represents a possible interesting case study addressing one of the main issues of digital media studies through a cultural project. Coming back to Minkowski's view, his analysis does not consider the innovative and deep structure of the exhibition. More specifically, whilst recognizing the value in the wealth of documents and access modalities, Minkowski is hopelessly searching for a linear and narrative model of interpretation. As becomes clear from the above discussion of the specific nature of digitized audiovisual content, linear narration is not the appropriate model for making sense of a database-style exhibition like *MindFrames*. In the same way as a user relates to a database, the viewer should completely renounce the claim to look up the whole artwork, finding an always different way to navigate through the corpus. So, *MindFrames* encourages the viewer to an exhibition experience which uses dynamic and interactive navigation at the same time, dislocated from the *hic et nunc* of the exhibition space.

9.2.3 EXHIBITING FILM AND REINVENTING THE PAINTING

Barbara Le Maître

Following up on Philippe Dubois's thoughts on the "cinema effect" and contemporary strategies of presentation of films in museum spaces, I would like to examine the encounter between film and painting. As the primary object in museum exhibitions, at least when it comes to art museums, the painting as an object operates according to a particular visual regime and falls within a system that regulates its perception.¹¹ Questioning the encounter between film and painting seems necessary insofar as the discussion inaugurated around the turn of the 1990s on the entrance of film and/or cinema into the museum has focused more on what happens to cinema in the era of its exhibition in museums (instead of its projection in movie theaters) than on what happens to the forms and objects that have historically constituted the museum in the era of their contamination by film.

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Before getting to the heart of the matter, some specifications are in order. If, as this text proposes to discuss, the encounter between film and painting is vividly or intensely actualized these days on the contemporary art scene, on the one hand, this encounter takes place against the background of a history of cinema regularly confronted with the issue of painting and, on the other hand, the same encounter introduces a kind of dialectical reversal in the field of contemporary art.

On Contemporary Art (in General) with Regard to the Painting¹²

Indeed, it seems that contemporary art was established on the principle of a refusal, and even a firm dismissal, of the painting:

For several decades, painting has alternately been declared dead and back. Painting does not come back any more than it dies. Yet the painting has disappeared or is disappearing. The unease produced among many sincere art lovers by the art of our time owes to the sense that artists today live and create on an absence and a lack [...]. The painting is par excellence an object that may be stored. It may be kept as easily on the walls as in compact reserve collections, safe and easily accessible. That is not the case of the majority of works produced over the past forty years, and more particularly of the large installations which are to contemporary art cent-

ers and major exhibitions such as the biennales and the Kassel Documenta what the paintings made for the Salons were to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (Wolf, 2005 : 11, 31)

All in all, contemporary art has cast aside painting as a medium and as an art form, opting instead to materialize in other forms such as installation or performance – or so the story goes. In this context, if the contemporary exhibition of film does imply painting, as I assume it does, the event in the field of contemporary art is a considerable one: something like a “return of the repressed” or, to put it more precisely, a reappearance of the major issue of painting on the very site where it was contested (and from which it was even ousted).

On the History of Cinema (in General) Confronted with the Painting

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While contemporary art was established without the painting, the same does not apply for cinema. Indeed, briefly put, cinema never ceased to be in confrontation with painting throughout its history, albeit in multiple and diverse modes – as if the film image had to negotiate its “visual logic” with its prestigious pictorial equivalent in order to exist as a valid image. The expression “painting shot” (*plan-tableau*) emblematically returns all the time in discourses related to cinema, in various texts and with different meanings, qualifying a form of autonomy of the shot inherent in early cinema for Noël Burch (1990), for instance, or a transposition of painting into a *tableau vivant* more strongly connected to modernity for Pascal Bonitzer (1987: 29-41). Still, can the question of the painting actually be addressed by any filmic object?

Essentially, a painting is an object and it is 1) painted; 2) visible; 3) mobile (it may be moved without any other operation than transportation); 4) autonomous (neither its spatial organization nor its signification are modified by these movements; 5) symbolic (its symbolic value is always higher than its functional uses); 6) unique (there is only one original); 7) identity-related (it has an identified author and contributes to the identity of its individual or collective owner); 8) valued on a market (it draws its monetary value from demand) (Wolf, 2004 : 84).

Beyond the regular comparisons between certain types of shots and the model of the painting, cinema, for the most part, admittedly produces objects which do not really refer to pictorial objects called “paintings.” And the multiple, moving, luminous images of cinema definitely involve effects of material and

medium that are quite different from those produced by the pictorial object. In addition, which is the medium of the image in cinema: the surface of its inscription, or the ever-ephemeral surface of its projection? Also, the distribution of the film in the form of multiple prints runs against the principle of uniqueness of the original which defines the painting – among other noticeable differences.

It is in the field of contemporary art, on the walls of galleries or museums rather than in traditional movie theaters, and precisely on the side of what Philippe Dubois describes as a “cinema effect,” that such hybrid objects may be identified. While any confusion with their pictorial equivalents is unlikely, they still reinvent the painting object *in spite of everything*, reformulating its aesthetic as well as its economy (as far as the articulation between original and copy is concerned, for instance). This phenomenon of re-appropriation of the painting is best exemplified by two figures: Sam Taylor-Wood, whose *Still Life* (video stills, 2001), exhibited at the Tate Modern, is made up of components that disintegrate in speeded-up motion before the spectator; and Mark Lewis, with his single-shot films that look like “slow paintings,” to borrow Julien Foucart’s expression. But then, how does this re-appropriation play out?

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On a Particular Encounter between Film and Painting on the Contemporary Scene: The Example of *Algonquin Park, September* (Mark Lewis, 2001)

In a text devoted to the pictorial aspects of Mark Lewis’s films, Bernhard Fibicher (2003) goes back over a few paintings which seem to lie behind *Algonquin Park, September*. He evokes more specifically *Boat on the Elbe in the Early Fog* by Caspar David Friedrich (1821). Sometime earlier, another commentator had also mentioned Friedrich while suggesting that the hybridity at work in the film was more complex and richer:

Although it was shot in Ontario in Canada, it could easily be the setting for a Caspar David Friedrich painting [...]. Slowly, as the mist begins to clear, it reveals a small boat being rowed through the channel between the island and the shore. The allusion here is to the Lumière brothers, and their film *Boat Leaving the Harbour* (1895) – Lewis’s own personal favourite of all the Brothers’ films and, in his view, one of the seminal landmarks in the history of cinema (Bode, 2002 : 16).

In short, this is a film that, in some respects, repeats a project which was initially that of painting (Friedrich’s, in the first place), while paying homage to

the cinema of the Lumière brothers (not to say *remaking* it). Yet exactly which aspects of this film belong in the pictorial realm? And how does the film alter or, perhaps, even reinvent the painting?

If *Algonquin Park, September* is so strongly associated with the painting, beyond the reference to Caspar David Friedrich, it is first of all because Mark Lewis renews the “aesthetic system of the painting,”¹³ referring to “a principle of arrangement (as well as contained expansion) of a fable or a complex figure within the strict frame of a composition,” in Jean-François Chevrier’s words (1990 : 75). However, all things considered, this principle qualifies the views resulting from the filming setup typical of the Lumière brothers as well as the ordinary visual organization of the painting – a setup that, as is well known, combined a still, single frame and an uninterrupted recording lasting as long as the reel itself. Of course, in the Lumière films, as well as the Lewis one, and unlike the painting, some motifs or figures sometimes exceed the frame – but most of the time, representation does not follow them. In other terms, keeping to the still, single frame, the Lumière films did contain and even *curbed* the potential expansion of the fable and its figures. Incidentally, the history of cinema largely revolved around this site, this problem of an “expansion of the fable” beyond the edges of the frame, the strict frame of a composition... In the end, through this double – pictorial and cinematographic – reference (the coupled allusion to Friedrich’s painting and to the Lumière films), Mark Lewis points out something like a complicity or a kinship between the aesthetic logic of the painting and a type of shot inherent in early cinema (see Fibicher, 2003). Most of all, Lewis gives this complicity, which more or less secretly runs and works through the history of cinema, a concrete, visual form.

Indeed, at a different level, “the impression of a painting” is evidently reinforced by the exhibition of Lewis’s works on the white walls of museums or galleries, rather than in the darkness of cinemas. The reinvention of the painting thus implies qualities internal to the representation as well as other qualities relative to the places and modes to display this representation.

Finally, if the painting is a matter for discussion here, notably when it comes to its relation with the setup of the Lumière films and beyond, it is not only because the filmic painting brings its “luminous material,” its “reproduced movement,” and its “recorded temporal flow” to the painting, but also because the principle of the loop, which governs the exhibition of such films in museum spaces, allows something like an *intermittent painting* to appear suddenly, then disappear, reappear, disappear again, and so on.

NOTES

- 1 Raymond Borde, the curator of the Cinémathèque de Toulouse and a historian of cinémathèques, has published an overview of these questions (Borde, 1989).
- 2 The Cinémathèque française was founded in 1936 out of a ciné-club, Le Cercle du cinéma. The fact that screenings were privileged over the scientific preservation of prints caused a break with the FIAF in 1959 and spurred the creation of the Service des Archives du film of CNC in France in 1969.
- 3 In the 1980s, Dominique Païni was the programmer at the movie theaters Studio 43 and Studio des Ursulines in Paris.
- 4 Some examples from the program at *Studio 43*: “La France de Pétain et son cinéma” on the occasion of the publication of Jacques Siclier’s book, “Le cinéma après guerre: Libération et moralité,” relying on Raymond Chirat’s *Catalogue des films français de fiction 1940-1949*, “Le cinéma français 1970-1980: de nouveaux imaginaires,” inspired by François Guérif’s book *Le Cinéma policier français*.
- 5 Founded by Raymond Borde in 1964, the Cinémathèque de Toulouse, in its first 20 years, was mostly a place where relations between cinema, history, and society were explored.
- 6 In an August 19, 1983 column, Serge Daney used this expression with respect to the French critic André Bazin, whom he then compared to Henri Langlois: “He was, with Henri Langlois, the other great B-movie filmmaker of his time. Langlois had an obsession: to show that all of cinema was worthy of preservation. Bazin had the same idea, but in reverse: to show that cinema preserved the real and that, before signifying it and looking like it, it embalmed it” (Daney, 1998 : 41).
- 7 A series of eight documentaries, *Histoire(s) du cinéma* was made between 1988 and 1998 by Jean-Luc Godard. Using excerpts from preexisting films, these documentaries are not structured chronologically. Instead, they rest on a montage proceeding by association of ideas, themes, and stylistic concepts. With the collage, spectators find themselves confronted with a subjective vision of history that draws its mode of expression from the resources of cinema itself.
- 8 Projections of excerpts were to punctuate the progression of the Musée du cinéma, but they could not be maintained on a long-term basis for technical reasons having to do with overheating projectors (Mannoni, 2006 : 425).
- 9 The study was carried out using the program from the retrospective *25 ans de cinéma* organized for the 20th anniversary of the Cinémathèque française (1 October 1956-31 March 1957 at the Musée pédagogique, rue d’Ulm in Paris). The catalogue can be found at the Bibliothèque du film in Paris (PCF 18-B1 : 1956).
- 10 See www.oasis-archive.eu/. The OASIS Archive is designed to be a user-friendly interface for digital document research and for the dissemination of individual works. At the same time, incorporation into the OASIS Archive assures the preservation of the digitized artworks.

- 11 This text deliberately refers to the painting as a particular object and thus uses the phrase “the painting” as the translation of “le tableau” in the French original.
- 12 For more developments on the relation of contemporary art to painting, please see my text “*De l’effet-cinéma à la forme-tableau*” (Le Maître, 2009). I wish to thank Luc Vancheri for allowing me to use some elements from that text here.
- 13 In French: “système plastique du tableau”.

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9.3 THE IMAGE TRAVELING ACROSS TERRITORIES: CINEMA, VIDEO, TV, MUSEUM, THE WEB, AND BEYOND

9.3.1 ON PASSAGES BETWEEN ART AND CINEMA

Ariane Noël de Tilly

In the section *Passing on Historical Images: Experimental Cinema and Video Art* of his article on the cinema effect in contemporary art, Philippe Dubois briefly mentions how experimental filmmakers and video artists have operated in the passages between art and cinema. He argues, on the one hand, that experimental cinema has originated “installations” as another existing form of cinema and on the other hand, that it is video art that has introduced the large-scale moving image in museums and art galleries. In what follows, I would like to propose a few nuances and complementary perspectives by discussing historical examples. Firstly, because a few artists, such as Andy Warhol, have worked with both mediums from the start, and secondly, because these experimental filmmakers and video artists shared concerns with other flourishing art forms of the time such as minimalism, conceptual art, and installation art. The aim is thus to broaden the perspectives to examine these passages.

One of the first dialogues or passages between the universes of art and cinema is Andy Warhol’s *Outer and Inner Space* (1965), a work that combined video and film in its making. In August 1965, the New York-based magazine *Tape Recording* lent a Norelco video recorder to Warhol in exchange for an exclusive interview (Goldsmith, 2004: 71). The artist first presented the videotapes in October 1965 in an underground space.¹ He eventually used two of the videotapes he had made, recordings of Edie Sedgwick, in the making of *Outer and Inner Space*. The film is made of two reels, each lasting 33 minutes. Each reel portraits a filmed Edie sitting next to a flattened Edie (the image prerecorded on video and played on a monitor). The actress is talking to a person outside the screen and, occasionally, when she turns a little towards the right it gives the impression that she is having a conversation with herself as if the filmed Edie is talking to the videotaped Edie. As stated by curator Callie Angell, the “outer” and “inner” of the title “refers not only to the dichotomy between Sedgwick’s outer beauty and inner turmoil, so vividly diagrammed in this double portrait, but it also describes the two very different spaces of representation occupied by the video/television medium and by film” (2003: 14). By using both video and film for the making of *Outer and Inner Space*, Warhol was able to explore their similarities and differences. Working with both mediums was rather infrequent in the 1960s, but it became common practice in the

1970s, as some artists were using videotapes to record, but would then transfer the result to films (and vice versa). *Outer and Inner Space* was first screened as a double projection in January 1966 at the Filmmakers' Cinematheque in New York, a place where many experimental filmmakers were presenting their films at the time. Warhol's *Outer and Inner Space* is exemplary of this passage between the universes of video and cinema as it can nowadays either be *exhibited* in a museum or *screened* in a cinema; it has different presentation modalities: it can either be a single or double projection – in the former case, the two films are projected one after the other; and it finally combined, in its making, video and film.

Another type of passage that occurred in the 1970s was when experimental filmmakers and visual artists deconstructed the cinematic experience and exhibited the components making it possible in museums, art galleries, and alternative spaces. For instance, with works such as *Line Describing a Cone* (1973) and *Long Film for Ambient Light* (1975), Anthony McCall made visible to the audience elements that were not intended to be explicitly seen by viewers in the cinema: the projector, the beam of light, the screen, the projectionist, and the space itself in which the projection was taking place. *Line Describing a Cone* “is dealing with the projected light-beam itself;” it “begins as a coherent line of light, like a laser beam, and develops through the 30 minute duration, into a complete, hollow cone of light” (McCall, 1978: 250). Rather than being projected on a screen, the film is projected on a wall. Artificial fog is also introduced in the exhibition space, to make the beam of light clearly visible as it develops into the shape of a cone. Because viewers are invited to walk about, around, and through the cone of light, *Line Describing a Cone* cannot be presented in a standard cinema; it needs an empty space, as it is a three-dimensional work.

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In 1975, at the Idea Warehouse in New York, McCall proposed an even more radical experience: a film that did not use camera, filmstrip, projector, or screen. *Long Film for Ambient Light* used space, light, and duration instead. Over the course of twenty-four hours, McCall invited visitors to walk into an empty Manhattan loft where the windows had been covered with diffusion paper and lit in the evening by a single lightbulb hanging from the ceiling. In *Long Film for Ambient Light*, McCall stripped down the cinematic experience to its most fundamental feature: light. At the same occasion, it reminded the public that if there is no lightbulb in the projector, then the film remains invisible.

In this translation of the cinematic components from the cinema to the space of museums and art galleries – thereby turning them into “light cubes”² – the influence of other artistic movements evolving at the same time such as minimalism and conceptual art, has to be considered. After all, McCall and

other artists and filmmakers exhibited the minimal and necessary features of the cinematic experience, and, in many cases, this was done within a rigorous conceptual structure. Cinema is approached here as an idea and experiments were done about how the idea of cinema could be expressed through different means. The aim was also to remove the emphasis on the very medium of film, to trigger a shift of perception, and to stress the importance of the process. Like artists working in the field of minimalism or conceptual art, they questioned the very nature of art and eliminated all non-essential forms; they introduced a shift in the perception of the viewers.

While certain artists were conducting experiments with film to exploit its sculptural properties and its possible expansion in space, others began working with video.³ Until the first Sony Portapak was released in 1965, artists such as Nam June Paik and Wolf Vostell made interventions on television monitors. Françoise Parfait has coined the term “vidéoclasme” to qualify their actions (2001: 21). As she explains, Paik and Vostell treated the monitors as sculptural forms and objects that they had to position and to connect in the available space. The artists initially distorted the TV signal and worked on the display of the monitors themselves; they were not yet dealing with videotapes. It is also important to point out that video art and video installations appeared almost at the same time. Indeed, Paik and Vostell’s interventions can be called video installations, as the artists had taken into consideration the space in which the artworks were presented. These works were developed in the exhibition space itself rather than in the studio. The gallery space became their site of creativity. In that sense, video was just as important as film in rethinking the exhibition modalities of the museum.

Alongside these “vidéoclasmes,” other artists, such as Peter Campus, were working with the real-time feedback property of video. In 1974, Campus created *Shadow Projection*, a closed-circuit video installation in which the viewer can see herself projected in the exhibition space as her presence was recorded live by a surveillance camera.⁴ This interactive artwork uses a theatrical light, a surveillance camera, a screen, and a projector. The surveillance camera and the projector are connected in order to form a closed circuit. Once the visitor stands in front of the light, the surveillance camera records her body and the recorded image is projected in real time on the screen displayed in the exhibition space. If the visitor is facing the screen, then it is her back that is projected onto it; if she is facing the camera, then her front is projected onto the screen; either way, the visitor will never be able to see her front as she cannot look in both directions (towards the surveillance camera and towards the screen) at the same time. Campus’ work made the visitors realize that *Shadow Projection* could not be apprehended by a unique and single point of view. A frontal perspective was no longer possible.

Like Paik's and Vostell's interventions discussed above, Campus's *Shadow Projection* has to be considered within a broader scope of artists who started making installation art in the 1960s and 1970s. In the beginnings, the artists were making ephemeral, temporary and site-specific works. One of the main features of installation art is spectator participation. As Campus has claimed, the work was interactive because "the projection really engaged the viewer to become, literally a part of the piece" (Hanhardt, 1999). Campus' closed-circuit video installations were perceptual experiments in which the viewers were invited to perform actions and to try to understand how their movements in the exhibition space were projected onto the screen. These works by Campus share the concerns that artists making installations had: turning the visitors into participants.

To conclude, the artworks discussed above have led us to adopt complementary perspectives to look at the passages between art and cinema. Rather than uniquely examining the passages between video art and experimental cinema, the present contribution attempted to contextualize the creation of video art and experimental film within the artistic production of the 1960s and 1970s, and more specifically, in relation to minimalism, conceptual art, and installation art. Firstly, the example of Andy Warhol's *Outer and Inner Space* has shown that video art and film were intertwined in his artistic practice. It was also used to point out that works such as *Outer and Inner Space* offer different exhibition modalities and that they do not have a unique destination (the cinema or the museum) as they can be screened and exhibited. Secondly, the study of Anthony McCall's *Line Describing a Cone* and *Long Film for Ambient Light* showed how McCall has deconstructed the cinematic experience and how he has questioned the very nature of the film medium. His approach shares similarities with the concerns of conceptual and minimal artists who were working at the same period and who were challenging the nature of the art object and the spatial experience with their interventions. This should be taken into account while looking at these passages. Thirdly, the last examples discussed (Paik, Vostell, and Campus) showed how the artists shared the concerns of contemporary artists making installations and how they attempted to turn the visitors into participants.

9.3.2 ACROSS THE TERRITORIES: EXHIBITING MUSIC VIDEO

Senta Siewert

In recent years, a particular genre of media art is increasingly finding its way into museums and art galleries without much recognition from art and film scholars, namely, the music video. Also in scholarly research on media art, the music video genre generally tends to receive only passing mention. The reason for this seems to be that music videos are usually perceived as a purely commercial medium, and not an art form.⁵ The art world's failure to recognize the music video is compounded by its ever-decreasing presence on television, which has led some media critics to speak of the "death of the music video," not unlike the concerns around the "death of cinema" (see Cherchi Usai, 2008). By contrast, as I will show, music videos are alive and kicking, and the changes taking place within music television can be seen as an opportunity for music video to expand into other venues. Moreover, I argue that the music video deserves the same kind of attention as film and video art, since these accepted art forms often clearly borrow from the visual and narrative strategies of the music video. As this contribution will make clear, a volume on media art such as the present one should necessarily take the phenomenon of the music video into account.

Taking a cue from Thomas Elsaesser, who argues for museums as a permanent home of film art, I will make a similar claim for music video art within museums. Elsaesser writes that canonical films should be perceived from the perspective of art historians or film anthropologists. As Elsaesser explains, "[t]he archive and the museum can and must take over from the film studio, the distributor and the exhibitor, to save, restore, preserve and *valorise*: as artworks as well as heritage and cultural patrimony" (Elsaesser, 2009: 1).

Philippe Dubois is similarly interested in the relationship between cinema and the museum. With his concept of "cinema effects," Dubois describes certain video installations that introduce the cinematic apparatus into the museum context and which refer to cinema or to film history.⁶ In what follows, I discuss how Dubois' idea of the "cinema effect" can be used productively when discussing the role and place of music videos in the contemporary exhibition scene. I suggest to call this phenomenon a "music video effect." While Dubois examines only video installations that reference films, it is noteworthy that music videos also refer to films and television, often using the technique of found footage.

In the museum, various exhibition strategies reveal to what extent an artistic work is shaped by a particular mode of presentation. In what follows,

new exhibition platforms for music videos will be analyzed on the basis of three examples: *VIDEO: 25 years of video aesthetics*, which was shown at the NRW Forum in Dusseldorf, *I want to see how you see* in Hamburg's Deichtorhallen, with works by over 50 artists from the Julia Stoschek Collection, and the New York Guggenheim show *YouTube Play: A Biennial of Creative Video*.⁷ I will first examine the existing relationship between MTV and television before elaborating on new contexts for music video, namely, the museum, festivals, the Internet and urban space. These new platforms provide a basis for understanding the distinct operations of the "music video effect" in contemporary arts and culture.

TV and MTV

The official emergence of music television in the 1980s was predated by extensive experimentation in video art. During the 1970s, many artists attempted to liberate modern art from its static existence. Video art pioneers like Nam June Paik and Wolf Vostell focused on the technology at first, manipulating the equipment itself. Vostell called this method "dé-coll/age." Television sets were covered in tape, wrapped in barbed wire or set in concrete, to emphasize the passive spectator sitting apathetically in front of the TV screen and waiting to be entertained. Examples include Nam June Paik's *Zen for TV* (1963), Wolf Kahlen's *Mirror-TV* (1969-1977) or Joseph Beuys' *Felt TV* (1970). The embrace of the music video as a new form of artistic practice by television coincided with these experiments in video art. In this sense the new art form of the music video followed the earlier experiments with synaesthetic perception, color-light-music and visual music in films by figures such as Walter Ruttmann, Oskar Fischinger and Hans Richter in the 1920s and 1930s. All of these practices attempted to fuse images and music into a unified whole.⁸

Starting in the 1980s, musicians and visual artists began to make use of the new platform of music television, where they could work on forms of visual expression guided by the music, and thus develop a new aesthetic. The starting point for the creative process was a preexisting song: musical structures that shaped the time axis could be transposed onto the image axis.⁹ Short units (intervals) would be repeated, analogous to the repetitive note or chord progressions (riffs) of pop/rock music. Besides the typical portrayal of subcultures, the aesthetic of the music video marks a specific interplay of image and sound as well as a rhythm of the montage and the creation of new visual worlds. Some music videos use music that follows the image, while others create added value with a contrapuntal arrangement of image and sound.

The American broadcaster MTV increasingly began to feature videos

with fast-paced editing for mass consumption, thus fulfilling the demands of both the music industry (promotion) and the TV industry (entertainment).¹⁰ Steve Blame, one of the first and best-known VJs, describes MTV as a promotional platform where a completely new star image could be established in the short period of three minutes.¹¹ However, from around the year 2000 music videos began to recede into the background of MTV's programming, which increasingly focused on docusoaps and reality shows. Since then, in order to be seen, the music video was in need of new screening venues and exhibition platforms. As a result, music videos are finding their way into museums and gallery spaces, a phenomenon that can probably be explained both by a new acceptance on the part of the art scene and the adaptation of music video to the art world. I will now examine the re-positioning of the music video more closely, with particular attention to display strategies within the museum.

Museum and Art Gallery

The exhibition *VIDEO: 25 years of video aesthetics* showed 100 videos. The videos were displayed on individual monitors set up in rows, presenting the most important contemporary tendencies culled from the workshops and archives of the video avant garde. Ulf Poschardt, the exhibition's curator, stated: "In contemporary video, reality and fiction, high and low, art and advertising, identity and virtuality, all coincide" (Poschardt, 2003: 10). The monitors displayed art videos, advertising commercials and – for the most part – music videos. This selection meant that visitors were given the opportunity to compare the visual styles of the different videos and the overlap between genres. The exhibition demonstrated that many videomakers no longer have any reservations about working within multiple artistic forms. Among the artists and filmmakers whose work was shown in the *VIDEO* exhibition were artists such as Matthew Barney, Marina Abramovic, Anton Corbijn, William Kentridge, Pipilotti Rist, and Bill Viola.¹² Chris Cunningham, for one, participated not only with music videos and commercials but also with his video installation *Flex* (2000). A surprise was that Damien Hirst did not show classical video art, but a music video. Ridley Scott's commercial for Apple Macintosh (1984) was included, as was David Lynch's *Adidas: The Wall* (1994). In addition, the exhibition included videos by Jean-Luc Godard and an episode from Andy Warhol's MTV show *15 Minutes* (1986). The combination of music and advertising in the work of a single artist was evident with Spike Jonze's music video *Praise You* (1999) for Fatboy Slim and his *Lamp* commercial for IKEA (2002). The exhibition design reflected the equal status given to the three genres of music, art,

and advertising: the monitors were set up in rows in such a way that the different genres and examples could coexist side by side.¹³

By contrast, *I want to see how you see* – a 2010 exhibition in Hamburg’s Deichtorhallen showing works by over 50 artists from the Julia Stoschek Collection – followed a different display strategy. The industrial architecture of the Deichtorhallen made it possible to use special structures to create a multifaceted video path leading the viewer through the exhibition. The roof of the great hall was covered up, creating a mysterious semi-darkness that served to draw attention to the video works. The most distinctive feature of the show was the decision to accord a central place to Björk’s music video *Wanderlust* (2008). The video’s position within the hall lent it equal, if not to say privileged, status alongside video art classics by Monica Bonvicini, Douglas Gordon, Isaac Julien, Anthony McCall, Marina Abramovic, and Bruce Nauman.

The video for *Wanderlust* was directed by the artist duo Encyclopedia Pictura (Sean Hellfritsch and Isaiah Saxon). Spectators equipped with 3-D glasses could experience the cinema ambiance of the black box and got immersed in Björk’s fairy-tale dreamworld. In the video, Björk drifts through fantastic mountain landscapes. The vivid stereoscopic 3-D images show animals and landscapes created through a mix of classical animation techniques, computer graphics, and live-action filmed sequences. The 3-D effects evoke a bizarre world with its own structures and perceptual possibilities, and thus help create a surreal, illusionary, sensuous, and immersive experience. The video reflects the music’s rhythm, and makes reference not only to the videos Björk created together with Michel Gondry but also films such as *The Never-Ending Story* (Wolfgang Petersen 1984), and early cinema classics like *A Trip to the Moon* (George Méliès 1902) and short films from cinema’s first decades.¹⁴ After having discussed museum strategies, I will now examine the existence of the “music video effect” in the context of festivals and via Internet and DVD platforms.

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Festival, Internet, and Urban Space

Early cinema shorts of the kind mentioned above were showcased in a retrospective program at the 2010 Short Film Festival Oberhausen, under the title *From the Deep: The Great Experiment 1898–1918*. Some of them, such as the film *Serpentine Dances* (France/USA ca. 1896–1898), seem like precursors of the music video since they have certain features in common with the music video such as the short length, and the dancing and musical accompaniment.¹⁵ Apart from these early works, the festival also showed current music videos in the MuVi section, which was initiated in 1999 and has since become a key

component of the Oberhausen festival program. MuVi, a competitive section, brings together artistically noteworthy music videos from Germany and around the world. Thus, in addition to music television, museums, and galleries, the music video has found yet another platform: the film festival. Oberhausen's festival director Lars Henrik Gass confirmed this in an interview:

It is really striking that music television, which introduced the genre of the music video, now shows fewer and fewer of them. It's a completely absurd development, but it has led to the very real possibility that music video will outlive music TV. In other words, music video nowadays has a thriving life of its own. Videos are shown at film festivals, they are watched on the Internet, they are having a wild time and really no longer need promotion from music TV to survive.¹⁶

350 | Gass refers here to the Internet as a new presentation platform for music videos. Reinforced by the recent popularity of YouTube and other video websites, artists can now present their work online as well.

One of the music videos that was shown in the MuVi-section of the Oberhausener Kurzfilmtage was also shown in the same year at the first video biennial organized by YouTube in cooperation with the Guggenheim. In the 2010 exhibition *YouTube Play: A Biennial of Creative Video*, the music video *Synesthesia* by Terri Timely (2009) was one of the 25 winning films out of the 23,000 clips sent in from 91 countries. The jury evaluated the videos according to the categories of music video, experimental film, and animation.¹⁷ These videos were shown as large-scale projections on the walls in the Guggenheim Museum New York.

With this display at the museum, music videos left the apparatus of the television behind, as well as the classical cinema screen and the space of the black box. These videos even extended beyond the Guggenheim museum space and reached a bigger audience due to their projection on the outside walls of the museum, in public space. The barriers of the exhibition space were extended even further, since the videos were shown at the same time in other Guggenheim Museums (Berlin, Bilbao, Venice) and on YouTube in order to reach an even larger global public. With this exhibition, the music video (and also the other forms of short film) finally reached some of the most acclaimed museums as well as the Internet.

Music Video Effect

Having taken into account the various developments that have affected the music video, I propose that we speak of a “music video effect,” comparable to the “cinema effect.”¹⁸ The music video aesthetic crops up in other artistic media and thus gains entry into the cinema, museum, festival, Internet, and urban space contexts. When the music video enters these various contexts, its avant-garde aesthetics of visual pastiche is foregrounded. The example of Björk mentioned above perfectly encapsulates the shifts undergone by the music video since its invention: a video abandons the TV monitor and is projected onto a film screen inside a black box in a museum space, thus becoming part of a complex exhibition strategy and is shown in the Internet and distributed on a DVD which can be purchased in the museum shop.

9.3.3 DEVELOPING, PRESENTING, AND DOCUMENTING UNSTABLE MEDIA AT V2_¹⁹

Arie Altena

Unstable Media

The origins of V2_ Institute for the Unstable Media go back to 1981, to the founding of an artist initiative in a squat in the Dutch city 's Hertogenbosch. During the 1980s their focus shifted to electronics, robotics, and the use of media and computers, and V2_ became a center for art and media technology. In 1987 V2_ issued the *Manifesto for the Unstable Media*. It was written out of dissatisfaction with the art world and its unwillingness or inability to take on new technologies. Since then, V2_ has taken up the name Institute for the Unstable Media, and has used the term 'unstable media' for the field it is covering.²⁰

In the *Manifesto*, unstable media are defined as all media that “use streams of electricity and frequencies,” and it states: “Instability is inherent to these media.” Though the original manifesto is now a historical document, it still serves as an inspiration. V2_'s current mission statement contains not only a reference to unstable media, it still states that instability is a creative force that is essential to the continuous reordering of social, cultural, political, and economic relations in society.

V2_ organises events, exhibitions, lectures, and festivals. V2_ also helps artists to develop technology, it publishes books, and it documents its own activities. V2_'s basic attitude toward electronic art is one of taking it as self-evident that, in a world filled with new media and new technologies, there will be artists who work and experiment with these technologies to make art, to react to the world, to express their feelings, to take a critical stance, or to shape a different “world.” The idea of a relation between the use of unstable media in society and in the arts is as self-evident for V2_ now as it was in 1987.

Presenting

In 1994 V2_ moved to Rotterdam. This move coincided with the upsurge of interest amongst artists in the possibilities of the Internet and the WWW for artistic expression and intervention. V2_ became one of the sites for this vibrant culture, and showed net art, as well as the work of artists working with virtual reality and 3-D projection. “Cyberspace” was the buzzword in

those days, and it was during that time that V2_ developed into a professional organisation with an international network. The Dutch Electronic Art Festival (DEAF) – organized more or less biannually – became the meeting ground for this network of artists and scientists. The first edition took place in 1994, the most recent one was the 2007 edition.

V2_ has a series of events that run throughout the whole year and combine lectures with performances and presentations in various formats. *Wiretap* was the longest-running series (1993-2002); this was followed by *Tangents* (2002-2007). The *dot.nu* series (2000-2002) presented works in progress by many live cinema artists, who at the time were often still studying at art school. The *Test_lab* series, which started in 2006, is meant as a showcase of work in progress. These events show the current state of unstable media, and are also an occasion to show what the V2_lab is developing, and to test it on a critical audience.

V2_ takes a thematic approach with all of these events. Every DEAF, for instance, had its own theme, and even from the titles, one can see V2_'s particular approach toward technological art.²¹ The emphasis lies on interaction, machine-body interface, and biological metaphors: *Digital Nature, Interfacing Realities, Digital Territories, The Art of the Accident, Machine Times, Information is Alive, Feelings are Always Local, Interact or Die!* These festivals were combinations of performances, concerts, an exhibition of mostly interactive installations, a film program, a symposium, lectures, workshops, expert meetings, and, occasionally, site-specific events. This has now become a standard format for new media art festivals.

The festival and presentation formats and the development of thematic programs probably have been more important to the curators and organizers of the DEAFs and other V2_events than theoretical curatorial considerations derived from the world of contemporary *visual* arts. For V2_ the context of technological arts and technological society with all of its fascinating developments (from computer games and scientific 3-D imagery to the uses of RFID, GPS, and biotechnology) comes first. But it is important to stress that technological arts are not about technology, they are about our world, about human feelings, our interactions with computers – or about any of the other “things” that contemporary art can be about. In that sense there is no difference between technological art and “traditional” art.

While organizing a festival, including an exhibition, the simple question of how to build (often complex) installations and how to place these inside the space available becomes a crucial concern. Works have to be set up properly so the audience can experience them fully. Because a festival often takes place at many different locations, it is possible to show performances on stage and computer installations in a semi-public space, as well as large installations in

a large space, and smaller works in separate rooms. Some works might be projected large on a wall, others screened on a monitor in a black (or white) box; other works might be screened on a monitor on a pedestal, and some works need a space as a playing field all on their own. Some works require a variety of exhibition modalities. Ideally, it is the work itself that determines the exhibition modality, yet in reality, compromises are also sought, necessitated by practical concerns.

New media festivals characteristically incorporate and accommodate different ways of presenting. Both artists and organizers are (or should be) conscious of the fact that “presenting” an artwork on stage or on screen during a lecture or artist presentation (talking about the work, showing clips), is something different than presenting the work itself as an autonomous work in an exhibition. As V2_ aims to stimulate debate and develops works in collaboration with artists, this type of artist’s presentation is very important. They include also test setups and first public presentations of works in progress. Showing a work which is still in progress can give the artist important insights into how an installation is functioning and what needs to be calibrated or changed. In most cases, such presentations have to be distinguished, however, from an exhibition or a proper performance of a finished work.

Another issue is the fact that complex interactive installations and technological works are often further developed after the first “proper” exhibition of the work, often because with time, a better technology becomes available (for example, a new type of sensor, or better software). Works go through versions. On the other hand, several works might be developed using similar technology and a similar concept.

If this sounds as if mostly practical considerations determine the presentation formats, I could rephrase it by saying that the instability of the situation is taken as the starting point for finding the best way to present, exhibit, or even develop a work. In the end, it is the thematic approach that determines the choice of works to be shown. This is also true for the international exhibitions curated by V2_, such as Zone V2_ at MOCA in Taipei (2007).

Developing

At the V2_lab, artists collaborate on electronic art projects and technical research projects with hard- and software developers, technicians, and scientists. These long- and short-term projects focus on the use of new technologies for artistic means and on the cultural and social implications of these technologies. The research projects have resulted in software tools, mixed media applications, and artworks that have been presented at various V2_events.

Since 2010, the V2_lab has been researching the topics of augmented reality and wearable technology. Augmented reality is the term for the layering of digital information onto physical reality as we perceive it; wearable technology concerns technology that can be worn on the body, or becomes part of the body, and often looks for connections to the world of fashion. Both concern the naturalization of technology and the incorporation of technology by the body and the mind.

Dutch artist Marnix de Nijs has collaborated with V2_ on various occasions, including on an augmented reality game entitled *Exercises in Immersion*. This work is about how the body adapts to the world it perceives through its senses, even if the sensory information it receives is not congruent with reality. For this work, De Nijs required a system that senses a player's location in real time and tracks what the player is viewing. It took a long time to develop the technical aspects of this system and, to some extent, this stalled the development of the artistic concept. In the end, a workable solution was found, combining sensors with custom-made software, and a first public test of the installation was shown at DEAF in 2007. The installation needed a complete hall for itself (at Pakhuis Meesteren in Rotterdam); no other work was exhibited there. Now the work mainly "exists" for the public in the form of texts, photographs documenting the exhibition, and a number of videos, some of which are available at V2_'s website. One video shows De Nijs talking about the work, interspersed with footage from the installation and visuals explaining the technology.²²

German artist Aram Bartholl developed his *Tweet Bubble Series* as an artist in residence at V2_. He started from the idea of showing Twitter messages on a T-shirt. Initially, Bartholl hoped to develop a T-shirt which could show any Twitter message, and code software that could connect the shirt to the Internet. This implied a very complex technological development process, which he (and others) assumed would not do justice to the simple, elegant concept. He subsequently realized four different versions of a shirt showing Twitter messages, using far simpler methods to get the idea across. *Pocket Tweets* used the mobile phone itself as screen: you put the phone in a special pocket on the front of the shirt; *Loud Tweets* used a LED name badge connected to the Internet; *Paper Tweets* lets you print out your most recent Twitter message on a sticker; and *Classic Tweets* is a thermochromatic T-shirt that can show three different classic Twitter messages. These versions were presented on stage in V2_ test lab, *Fashionable Technology*. This is a work that is very suitable for a type of artist presentation at an event. In addition to an artist talk in which the concept is shown, and maybe explained, it could include videos of former presentations or performances, a rehearsed performance, and/or an invitation to the public to try the works out for themselves. In fact, Bartholl often uses a mix of these forms – though a performative approach is important to him.

Documenting

Documenting works like *Tweet Bubble Series* and *Exercises in Immersion* includes recording both the conceptual and technological development as well as storing software and technical specifications. To preserve the work, one also has to store physical components. In the case of *Exercises in Immersion*, this is a complex and costly affair, as there is quite some hard- and software to take into account. Additionally, videos of presentations and performances should be stored, and it is also important to keep a record of the cultural contexts which were important to the development and the concept of the work; artist statements and interviews often give insight into this as well. For interactive works in particular, there is the issue of the calibration of the work (how fast or slow should it react?) and the preferred interaction. Such issues could be covered by descriptive texts, interaction diagrams, and video documentation of the work in action.

Because V2_ has documented its own activities from early on, there is an archive of hundreds of videotapes, digital video files, and over 15,000 digital and digitized photographs.²³ These are an invaluable resource for the history of electronic and new media arts in the Netherlands. They also accidentally and partially document some of the works that were shown or developed at V2_, and thus continue their visibility on a different platform. To give an example: the video registration of Dick Raaijmakers performance *Intona* is probably the only video of this work in existence. What once was “just registration” can become an invaluable resource for art history or reconstruction only 20 years later. Similarly, the archive contains a live stream of the V2_event at which Bartholl’s *Tweet Bubble Series* was presented, and photographs that document it, just as is the case for *Exercises in Immersion*. The task of the V2_ archive is to make this material, mostly digital born, accessible to the public through a website.

On V2_’s current website, items are connected through keywords, a related-items algorithm, and through editorial links (human-made connections between different items in the website). Works, events, people, organizations, articles, videos, and photographs are connected by both humans and machines, enabling the visitor to explore and discover the history of V2_ and technological art.²⁴ This can be seen as one of the presentation strategies of V2_ – many people will only get to know works through the online documentation. It is a way in which works “exist” for the public, although this type of “existence” should not be confused with the work itself. There are many artists who make work for online exhibition, but they are a minority among the artists who work and exhibit at V2_.

Ideally, documentation of works should grow over time. Essays and

reviews could be added over time, as could archival material dug up from V2_ computers. (An example of this are wikis used during the technical development.) Software used to run a work could be offered for download. When such documentation becomes very refined and rich, it seems almost possible to see it as a substitution for physical preservation. This, however, can never be the case for interactive installations, as these have to be experienced physically.

Video art – especially single-screen works – could indeed be preserved online. Additionally, screen-based digital or interactive work that can run on any normal computer can be preserved up to a certain extent in a digital archive. An example of this are several net artworks that V2_ hosted in the late 1990s that still have their original files on V2_'s server. One could give website users access to such works even if it means they just download the original files. Making a work function in a “sufficient” way, however, may or may not be possible at times, depending on the type of work. Often works made in the past were so technically simple (by 2011 standards) that they will still run without a problem. On the other hand, they might not run in the right way, as computers today are faster, browsers have changed, and some works made heavy use of the context of other websites that may have disappeared or radically changed since the 1990s. In other words: archiving the files is one thing, but the ways in which a net artwork can be brought to “life” can be best decided on a case-by-case basis, for instance when there is an opportunity to install or exhibit such a work again.

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- 1 In 1965, Warhol recorded at least eleven videotapes with the Norelco camera. As indicated by Callie Angell, “the only accessible footage from these early video exists in [*Outer and Inner Space*], which Warhol, in effect, preserved by reshooting them in 16mm” (Angell, 2002).
- 2 I borrow the expression “light cube” from David Joselit (2004: 154).
- 3 Of course, some of them, such as Andy Warhol discussed above, but also VALIE EXPORT and Peter Weibel, were working with both mediums.
- 4 *Shadow Projection* was initially shown at The Kitchen in New York 9-18 May 1974. See The Kitchen Calendar: http://www.eai.org/user_files/supporting_documents/MAY74EAI.pdf (last access 5 August 2010). It was then shown in the exhibition *Projected Images* (Walker Art Center, 21 September-3 November 1974) discussed previously in this chapter.
- 5 An example of this approach is Goodwin (1992).
- 6 Dubois defines the “cinema effect” as follows: “this ‘cinema effect’ is extremely diversified, takes multiple forms, and operates at all levels (institutional, artistic, theoretical, or critical).” See page 312 of the present volume.
- 7 *VIDEO: 25 years of video aesthetics*, exhibition held at the NRW Forum in Düsseldorf 24 January-18 April 2004; *I want to see how you see*, exhibition held at the Deichtorhallen Hamburg 16 April-25 June 2010; *YouTube Play: A Biennial of Creative Video*, exhibition held at the New York Guggenheim 21 October 2010.
- 8 See Cytowic (2002); Weibel (1987). See also chapter 1 of the present volume. Paik’s background in music theory, and the influence of John Cage, are part of the context for his avant-garde musical practices and his attempts to break with Western musical conventions and representations, such as the live performances in which Paik destroyed a piano.
- 9 Links between the phenomenological qualities of sound and image as well as the possibility of creating new forms of experience are discussed in Siewert (2010).
- 10 MTV was launched in the US in 1981 with a video by The Buggles, aptly titled “Video Killed the Radio Star.” Six years later, MTV Europe was launched.
- 11 Steve Blame, cited in the introductory episode of the seven-part documentary series *Fantastic Voyages – Eine Kosmologie des Videoclips* (Director: Christoph Dreher, Assistant Director: Senta Siewert, produced in 2001 for Arte). Three noteworthy publications on the music video: Keazor and Wübbena (2005); Krüger and Weiss (2007); and Vernallis (2008). The latter characterizes the music video aesthetic as determined by an intensified audiovisual continuity.
- 12 Further artists whose work was shown include Dara Birnbaum, Peter Callas, Ingo Günther, Mariko Mori, Joe Pytko, Jo Sedelmaier, Tarsem Singh, Klaus vom Bruch, Ridley Scott, Traktor, Sophie Muller, and Rotraut Pape.

- 13 Other comparable exhibitions include: “Exposition of Music Electronic Television,” Galerie Parnass, Wuppertal (1963); “Art of Music Video,” Long Beach Art Museum (1989 + 1999); “What a Wonderful World – Music Video in Architecture,” Groningen Museum (1990); “Visual Music,” Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2004); “Sons & Lumières,” Centre Pompidou, Paris (2004); “The Art of Pop,” Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Cologne (2011). Another platform for music videos are DVDs, especially DVD collections of the work of individual music video directors, which have a wide potential audience: music fans, music video enthusiasts, as well as art aficionados. They buy these DVDs, which are also offered for sale in the gift shops of most contemporary art museums. To name just a few examples: *The Work of Director Chris Cunningham*, *The Work of Michael Gondry*, *The Work of Director Spike Jonze*, *The Work of Director Anton Corbijn*, *The Work of Stephane Sednaoui*, *The Work of Mark Romanek* and *The Work of Jonathan Glazer*, *Various Artists – Music Video Art* (all released by EMI between 2003–2005).
- 14 Gondry directed the videos for *Human Behaviour* (1993), *Army of Me* (1995), *Isobel* (1995), *Hyperballad* (1996), *Jóga* (1997), and *Bachelorette* (1997).
- 15 *Serpentine Dances* (France/USA ca. 1896-1898), 60m, 3', 35mm, color, from the archive of the Cineteca di Bologna. The film program was curated by Eric de Kuyper and Mariann Lewinsky.
- 16 From an interview conducted during the 2010 festival, with students from my seminar on “Media Art Institutions and Promotion” (Ruhr-Universität Bochum, summer semester 2010). In the interviews, various film directors and organizers noticed that music videos are increasingly less associated with television and more often with visual art. Other important festivals in this context are the European Media Art Festival (Osnabrück), transmediale (Berlin), Ars Electronica (Linz), Internationales Bochumer Videofestival, and the International Symposium on Electronic Arts (various locations).
- 17 The jury members were Laurie Anderson, Animal Collective, Darren Aronofsky, Douglas Gordon, Ryan McGinley, Marilyn Minter, Takashi Murakami, Shirin Neshat, Stefan Sagmeister, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and Nancy Spector.
- 18 The “cinema effect” can be found also in the Hamburg exhibition discussed above. The installation *Destroy She Said* (1998) by Monica Bonvicini shows selected film clips of various film divas, such as Monica Vitti in *L'Avventura* (1959), Jeanne Moreau in *La Notte* (1961), Catherine Deneuve in *Repulsion* (1965), and Brigitte Mira in *Fear Eats the Soul* (1973).
- 19 Many of the sources used for this article can be found on V2_'s website; Altena (2008 and 2009), Bartholl (2009), Mulder (2010) Mulder and Post (2000) and Nijs (2007) are referenced to directly.
- 20 For more information about V2_'s mission, history, and research, please see <http://www.v2.nl/organization>, <http://www.v2.nl/organization/mission>, and <http://www.v2.nl/lab/research>.

- 21 When I write “technological art” in this text I refer very broadly to art which in one way or another uses electronics and/or computers.
- 22 Available online at: <http://www.v2.nl/files/retrospective/2007-EI4.mp4/view>.
- 23 The current V2_archive should not be confused with V2_Archive, under which name V2_ released a large number of cassettes, some artist videos, LPs, and CDs in the 1990s. V2_Archive (as a cassette and record label) was run by Peter Duimelinks at V2_. V2_archive is now used as the name for the online archiving activities of V2_.
- 24 However, it needs to be said that the implementation of all the archive material on the website is far from finished. For instance, the presentation of a certain work developed in collaboration with V2_ would also ideally have descriptions of the software and hardware that was used, and would include links to software downloads (if developed by V2_) and technical documentation.

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9.4 NEW DISPOSITIFS, NEW MODES OF RECEPTION

9.4.1 VIDEO INSTALLATIONS AS EXPERIENCES IN MONTAGE

Térèse Faucon

Walking through spatial arrangements involving multiple screens, such as those evoked by Philippe Dubois in the conclusion, makes it possible to postulate a spectator-editor. Thanks to their mobility, spectators experience the gestures of the editor: moving (from one screen to the next), stopping, coming back, seeing the loops of images again. The multiplication of screens in space invites one to edit, tapping into a desire to transform the diverse into a universe, link scattered elements back together, interpret them, and to order them to perform a specific reading. However, spectators do not produce a montage (in the sense of a series of images given to see), their gesture is performative. It is the very act of editing which is at work there. To experience editing is to apprehend the virtuality of the interval, the movement of a shot towards another shot described by Vertov. Spectators then become aware and learn about what Thierry Kuntzel called “the other film,” the physical medium of film but

which should not be considered in its materiality as a strip of celluloid, in the succession of visual signs and sound signs laid out according to an axis (the ribbon laid flat, unwound) but rather, as in a virtual film, the film underneath the film. This other film would be like the ribbon wound up on the reel, as a volume; a film freed from temporal constraints, and in which all elements would simultaneously be present, that is, without any effect of presence (screen-effect), but ceaselessly referring to one another, matching up, overlapping, clustering in configurations “never” seen nor heard when the film runs in the projector. [...] A text-film, at last (Kuntzel, 2006: 113-4).

This film text reveals the “[original] virtuality of editing” (Bulot, 2003), and it points to its blind spot. It should be remembered that, for the first 30 years of cinema, editing techniques did not make it possible to see the image in movement. To edit was to touch images before seeing them, to feel the rhythm passing through one’s fingers as they held the film, to count film frames and time.

Experiencing the interval is thus to apprehend the threshold (*schwelle*), in this instance, the space between screens, as a zone, a highly vibratory space. Benjamin noted that “transformation, passage, wave action are in the word

schwellen, swell” (Benjamin, 1999: 494). Spectators familiar with installations remember that, quite often, these spaces confuse one’s bearings (scale and orientation) and are defined through a “geometry of the unstable,” characterizing the fluid world of the screen according to Jean Epstein, who found new possibilities in these omni-audiovisual, immersive, and multisensorial “arrangements of images-spaces” (Bellour, 1994: 52). This singular kind of space, explored by spectators as

the cinematographic space [...] does not have any homogeneity or symmetry, it represents a space in movement or, to put it better, a space created, not by the well-determined positions of solids with stable shapes of Euclidian space, but by ill-defined movements of specters whose form also evolves and which behave like fluids. Euclid reportedly drew his figures on the sand of Alexandria’s beaches. [...] A fundamentally moving world requires a kind of geometry that works on quicksands. And this geometry of the unstable governs a logic, a philosophy, a common sense, a religion, an aesthetics founded on instability (Epstein, 1975: 215).¹

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One installation, *The Ground Is Moving* (Christophe Oertli, 2010), epitomizes particularly well the qualities shared by the cinematographic space and the space of installation at the same time as the fact that these spaces may give way, that they are variable and even fluid. The setup is simple: two screens are juxtaposed, linking spaces into urban panoramas (streets, places, gardens), most of the time without revealing the join (see Fig. 9.1 in color section). This recomposed contiguity is sometimes flaunted by the temporal continuity of the movement of passers-by from one screen to the other, sometimes betrayed by the temporal disturbances restoring the sharp edges of the frame and affecting the parts of a body (a hand, for instance) or causing cars to appear/disappear at a crossroads on either side of the join. This “trick panorama” meets with the resources of a space conducive to all kinds of conjuring acts inherited from Méliès. The installation also trains the look of spectators to the movement inherent in editing through the movement of looks or bodies from one screen to the other. The movement of the camera sometimes mimics the mobility of the spectators’ look, with sudden accelerations in the course of a very slow tracking shot, accelerations whose effect borders on that of a whip pan, all unwinding a panorama which could proceed indefinitely. The space slides along under the eye as would the ground under a *chassé*. This equation of eye and foot is often noted in experiences of walking/editing actualized in video installations. Another principle well known by walkers also governs editing, since the space is not only smoothed out by these effects of uninterrupted run. Darker areas (arcades, porches, and doors) and well-lit areas, points of

suture (posts, columns, trees) also define it as a striated space, made of folds, trap doors, the site of all disappearances where bodies seem to follow “secret smugglers’ paths” (as notably described by Kracauer, see below) before reappearing somewhere else or substituting for other bodies. These movements do not occur only in space, but also in time:

When I peered to all sides, from the sun into the shadows and back to the day, I had the distinct sensation that I was moving not only in space in search of my desired goal, but often enough transgressed the bounds of space and penetrated into time. A secret smugglers’ path led into the realm of hours and decades, where the street system was just as labyrinthine as that of the city itself (Kracauer 2009 [1964]).

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For *Electric Earth* (1999), Doug Aitken started from this temporal experience of space, which also problematizes the posture of the spectator in the space of the setup through the figure of break-dancer Ali Johnson. Eight screens distributed in a rectangular space recompose a deserted urban landscape, which sometimes unfolds from screen to screen, sometimes retreats into the next screen in a mirrorlike effect. The same goes for temporality, which seems to regain a continuity and a development through the circulation of the character or to go into a loop through the multiplication of the same shot on several screens. Spectators are invited to follow into the character’s footsteps and experience the energy of that space. Everything begins with the man looking into the camera, facing spectators/visitors. This first shot makes the “according,”² or tuning, possible. Spectators follow into Ali Johnson’s gaze just as they will follow into his step or even his dance. The character is lying in his bed in a state of prostration, a remote control in his hand, in front of a television screen showing just snow. His sleepy eyes express only boredom and lethargy, and he is as inexpressive as the flickering monitor. He whispers, “A lot of time, I dance so fast that I become what’s around me. It’s like food for me. I, like, absorb that energy, absorb the information. It’s like I eat it. That’s the only now I get.” He then starts to move, walks, and seems to be receptive to the energy of the electrified earth he crosses, the surroundings of an airport and a deserted commercial zone at dusk, for instance.

“Taking a walk can be an uncanny experience. Propelled by our legs we find rhythms and tempos. Our bodies move in cycles that are repetitious and machine-like.” The walk of the man, more and more mechanical and spasmodic, thus moves towards a strange dance that seems to mimic the rhythm of machines and automatons of the deserted urban space he crosses – with the stop by the laundromat probably being the most striking. Indeed, “the landscape is stark and automated, but the electricity driving machines is ultimately

more important than the devices it drives. It's what the protagonist responds to, and, in turn, what puts him in motion" (Doug Aitken, in Anton, 2000: 30).

Aitken seems to stage the abolition of "the double scene, the double way to exist" for the spectator, as Daney described it (1993: 32), if the setting into motion of the character in this space of fluxes is associated with the movement of the spectators' response in the installation as they enter into an interaction with the fluxes of images. The eight screens of the installation display close-ups of the different rhythmic and vibratory agents contaminating the movement of the dancer to give spectators of the installation the chance to experience it as well, to help this movement to spread to the body of the spectator. Spectators are thus caught up in this space of circulation, not in the sense of the immobilized or trapped captive, but rather with the idea of literally being *mobilized*, by conduction – of being plugged into these fluxes of images and taken away, swept along by them.

We lose track of our thoughts. Time can slip away from us; it can stretch out or become condensed. But this loss of self-presence, it seems, can sometimes produce another kind of time, the speed of our environment becomes out of sync with our perception of it. When it happens it creates a kind of grey zone, a state of temporal flux. The protagonist in *Electric Earth* is in this state of perpetual transformation. The paradox is that it also creates a perpetual present that consumes him (Doug Aitken, in Anton, 2000: 31).

The walk of the character in *Electric Earth*, like the movements of bodies in *The Ground is Moving*, seems to unwind a perpetual, ungraspable present without aim nor incidents.

Consequently, it appears as though the most accurate term to refer to the movement of the eyes slipping from an image to the next, from a motif to another motif, may be a term borrowed from video, possibly in opposition to the usual definition of montage but corresponding to the idea that montage belongs in the flux, in vibration, in mutation rather than in fragmentation and articulation. *Processing* involves work on the image itself, its material, its flux. Is it not what spectators of the installation experience when they activate the energy of the interval? Do they not discover that the image has various possible becomings? According to Élie Faure, this definition of the image and of montage refers to the essence of cinema. *Process*, by way of "procession," thus takes us back to *cinéplastique*, to this ability to experience plasticity with "the constant unexpectedness forced on the work by a mobile composition, ceaselessly renewed, broken and reconstructed, vanished, revived, collapsed, monumental for a split second, impressionistic the next" (Faure, 1953: 26).

9.4.2 FROM THE FILM TO THE MAP: PATRICK KEILLER AND *THE CITY OF THE FUTURE*

Teresa Castro

Designed by English filmmaker Patrick Keiller, the source for the installation *The City of the Future* is an interactive DVD investigating the representations of urban landscape in early British cinema (1896-1909).³ Based on the DVD, the installation was presented at the British Film Institute (London) from November 2007 to February 2008 (see Fig. 9.2 in color section). Combining 68 films from the period, it comprised five screens laid out in the room according to the geographic relations between locales represented in the films, thus using cartographic spatialization as its fundamental principle. Each screen featured a different sequence: introduced by maps, these were organized as a journey in the United Kingdom of the early 20th century. On the main screen, a strip of images reconstructed an itinerary from Nottingham to Halifax while two screens nearby presented films shot in Greater London and documenting a trip between Halifax and Barton as well as images recorded during a journey between New York and Dublin. Spectators were invited to stray from these pre-determined paths and explore other British and overseas landscapes thanks to the maps.

Since the early 1980s, Patrick Keiller, who was originally trained as an architect, has been reflecting on urban spaces in contemporary Great Britain. The author of several “semi-documentary” films (in the artist’s own words), often designed as travelogues or imaginary diaries tapping into the British documentary tradition (*London*, 1993; *Robinson in Space*, 1997), he set out on a different line of experimentation with *The City of the Future*. Conceived as an installation, the latter still centers on the urban environment and the figure of the city. The artist had already explored spatial and scenographic possibilities of this medium with *Londres – Bombay*, a monumental installation presented at Le Fresnoy (France) in 2006 and featuring about 30 screens. A new essential element appears in *The City of the Future*: cartographic images. Though they appear on all screens, their role should not be mistaken as that of a mere interface or even a nice-looking navigation menu. These images provide the key to understanding some aspects of Keiller’s project, including the very choice of the installation as the device to explore images. Transforming – and dramatizing – the spatial relationships between its constituent elements in the substance of the work, Keiller saw a sounder option in the choice of the installation as an exhibition format. As he explained in a 2007 interview to *The Guardian*:

I embarked on an exploration of landscape in early film, with the idea of discovering something about the evolution of urban space (...). Early films are generally between about one and three minutes long and, lacking montage, close-up and other sophistications, they depict spaces in which one's eye can wander. Because of this they encourage repeated viewings. A compilation film, which had been my initial expectation, seemed to deny their most intriguing possibilities. I had the idea to arrange them spatially, on a network of maps, and set about making a "navigable" assembly that has since evolved to include 68 early films of UK and other landscapes, in which the films can be viewed in two interconnected ways: both by exploring a landscape of maps and films, in the manner of a flâneur, and as a linear sequence (Keiller, 2007).

Inviting the eyes to wander, these films encourage a "para-cartographic" look:

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Maps involve imagined spaces and imaginative spatial exploration. The pleasure in viewing them is a form of journey: viewing maps stimulates, recalls, and substitutes for travel. Like engaging with a map, experiencing film involves being passionately transported through a geography. One is carried away by this imaginary travel just as one is moved when one actually travels or moves (domestically) through architectural ensembles (Bruno, 2002: 185).

The choice of the installation allowed Keiller to exhibit these films, not as documents, but for the wandering look that characterizes them. A visual phenomenon by nature, the cinematographic movement of the look gradually substituted for the multi-sensorial experience of conventional travel. If, in the films of the first decades of the 20th century, the movement of the spectator's look was inscribed in the images by the many panning shots punctuating them, in Keiller's installation such movement has become concrete again. Since the layout of the installation was dictated by geographic elements, the work also operates as a kind of three-dimensional diagram of possible paths, inviting spectators (and their gaze) to wander physically. In so doing, the installation elevates wandering to the status of a model for reading and interpreting images. In that sense, *The City of the Future* as a device succeeds in pacing a critical territory and in exposing some fundamental trends in the films of early cinema, thanks to the dramatization and the organization of images possessing a topographic value. These trends are related to the spectatorial gaze summoned by these films and the model of the journey underpinning them, as well as the geographic imagination in which they take part.

Insofar as *The City of the Future* is a device for arranging and displaying

images marked by the dramatic dimension of its spatializations and the cinematographic aspect of the movements it encourages, could it not be defined as a three-dimensional atlas, one shaping a wandering gaze quite literally? With Keiller's installation, the atlas as a form is brought up to date, and accordingly much transformed, in the space of an exhibition gallery. The approach chosen by the artist makes the films "navigable," as Keiller opts for a cumulative and analytical logic that defines atlases, considering films critically, from the standpoint of how they may inform us about the evolution of urban space. Also, his arrangement of images is subject to a conception of segmentation and progression which is at once geographic and internal to the film's space. Perfecting the atlas as the *mise en scène* of a totality – a geographic one, in this case – and as a device for articulating relations between places, *The City of the Future* is an atlas of filmic landscapes in the United Kingdom in the first years of the 20th century.

368 | Still, the mapping impulse of Keiller's project is not limited to these aspects. Given the fact that the artist claims to use the installation device, not only to be able to archive, but also to observe differences between yesterday's and today's urban spaces, the main issue for this installation and its images is to map out a virtual landscape. With his installation, Keiller puts to the test Henri Bergson's hypothesis that the images of the past contain those of the future.⁴ By confronting us with these images of the past in the present, the artist's avowed goal is to map out possible experiences of the city in the future. The idea of mapping invokes a new definition of the map here, such as the one advanced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, for example:

What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. (...) The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification (1987: 12).

If this definition is often mentioned with respect to the appropriation of cartographic images by contemporary artists, in this context it makes the resort to ideas of map and mapping even more precise. Indeed, rather than freezing the relations between places in a closed, completed representation – which can thus be referred to tracing – Patrick Keiller's "atlas installation" looks like an open aggregate of relations, like a map whose moving coordinates are ceaselessly redefined by the movements of visitors and the users of the DVD. Conceived as a journey in a plurality of virtual "maps" tracing only possible paths, *The City of the Future* is an instrument of critical pacing inspired by the images themselves and the wandering gaze they give rise to. Finally, insofar as the installation generates its own "territories," it appears as a kind of uto-

pian fiction, translated physically as the circularity of the installation. At once closed and open, the latter is capable of turning its limits into a totality and multiplying its visual and critical horizons infinitely. The eminently urban subject matter of Keiller's project finds all its scope around this last idea, the "installation atlas" being in the end a "utopics of the city" in Louis Marin's sense: a real and imaginary construction of spaces showing incoherent places and spaces (Marin, 1984). As Marin noted, "a portrait, a city map is thus at once the trace of a residual past and the structure of a future to be produced" (Marin, 2001: 205). Bearing the trace of this old memory, Keiller's "installation atlas" recreates in the space of a gallery the figure of the map, understood both as experimentation on the real and as diagram producing a whole class of possible narratives. The part played by spectators and the trajectories they follow is essential, their bodies – like their gazes – becoming the source of a logic of composition of images.

9.4.3 SITE-SPECIFIC EXHIBITION AND REEXHIBITION STRATEGIES: MAX NEUHAUS'S TIMES SQUARE⁵

Elena Biserna

Times Square is a permanent sound installation created in 1977 by Max Neuhaus in New York. Often considered a pioneering example of sound art, this work should also be regarded as one of the first time-based site-specific artworks in public space. The installation was active until 1992, when Neuhaus decided to stop it because of his inability to continue to monitor it by himself. After ten years, thanks to the initiative of the Christine Burgin Gallery, the artist reinstalled *Times Square* on its site, making the work accessible again 24 hours a day and, subsequently, donating it to the Dia Foundation.

370 | The reinstallation process is of particular interest because it took the form of a recreation of the work by the artist himself and can lead us to consider some core issues of the relationship between exhibition and reexhibition with a focus on site-specificity. The first part of this text aims at investigating *Times Square*'s relationship with context and audience in the framework of coeval site-specific and public art practices; the second part describes the reinstallation project, while the third discusses this work in the context of current preservation strategies taking into consideration the roles of the artist, of technology, and the notions of authenticity and identity of the artwork. These issues are involved in the multilayered relationship between preservation and exhibition decisions transforming reinstallation, as we will see, in a new "creative process."

Times Square, 1977: In Situ Sounds

Max Neuhaus' *Times Square* is a complex sound topography – a volume defined by acoustic, intangible boundaries – created by continuous synthetic sounds diffused in an underground chamber, part of the subway ventilation system, in a triangular pedestrian island on Broadway, between 45th and 46th streets: a crowded and cacophonous place crossed every day by thousands of passers-by (see Fig. 9.3 in color section).

Like all of Neuhaus's other installations, it was created through a long process of analysis, investigation and experimentation *in situ*. In the case of *Times Square*, as the artist declared,

I began making the piece by investigating what the resonant frequencies of the chamber were. The next step was a gradual process of selecting which resonances to use and how to use them. I finally determined a set of sonorities, four independent processes, which activate the resonances I chose, activate the chamber. These resonance-stimulator sounds are produced with a synthesis circuit and come out of a large loudspeaker horn, one by two meters (Neuhaus, 1994d: 66).⁶

The sounds audible in the pedestrian island, coming from the chamber through the grating, are the result of the interaction between the frequencies and the acoustic characteristics of the architecture: they result in a continuous drone, “a rich harmonic sound texture resembling the after ring of large bells” (Neuhaus, 1983: 17). The sound installation is thus physically bound to the architectural context: the underground space becomes a resonant chamber creating a continuous sound field, which can be experienced by the listener moving on the grate.

Max Neuhaus’ *place works*, and *Times Square* in particular, should be considered in the framework of a wider area of research that – rejecting a conception of art as production of objects and refusing modernist art’s self-

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Max Neuhaus installing *Times Square*, New York, 1977 © the Estate of Max Neuhaus. Courtesy of the estate of Max Neuhaus.



referential autonomy – turned to the creation of site-specific works. In the case of Neuhaus, an artist with an important musical background, the medium is sound. Deliberately abandoning musical official circuits, the artist led some of the post-Cagean legacy's ideas to extreme consequences and reterritorialized them into the art system. Firmly convinced of the hearing's possibilities to strongly influence the perception of space, Neuhaus operated a fundamental change of paradigm, "that of removing sound from time and putting it, instead, in space" (Neuhaus, 1994a: 5), creating installations to be experienced perceptually by an audience which is free to manage both the spatial and the temporal dimension moving within them. These works are thus aligned with the phenomenology-oriented site-specific practices which, according to Miwon Kwon, "focused on establishing an inextricable, indivisible relationship between the work and its site, and demanded the physical presence of the viewer for the work's completion" (2002: 11-12). *Times Square's* form is not autonomous, but dependent on the context and the audience's experience.

Moreover, the relationship with site is, in the artist's intention, not limited to its architectural level. He affirmed, "They [*place works*] shape, transform, create, define a specific space with sound only. They exist not in isolation, but within their context, the context of their sound environment, their visual environment, and their social environment" (1994: 58). *Times Square* was not commissioned; it is the result of an independent project carried out independently by the artist for about three years (See Tomkins, 1994). The artist stated repeatedly that the idea of this work was born by his fascination for this place, New York's "most public of places." This choice is based on the will to involve a wider audience outside the constrictive boundaries of cultural institutions. The necessity of expanding art's audience and working in everyday contexts is shared by a large group of artists between the 1960s and the 1970s and, since the mid-1970s, also some of the organizations promoting public art in the US – first of all the NEA, which provided funds for *Times Square* – acknowledged the new site-specific post-minimalist instances (Lacy, 1995: 21-24. For an overview of exhibition spaces at the origins of installation art: Reiss, 2001).

Seen from this perspective, the installation seems to elude the two public art paradigms which, according to Kwon, were prevalent during the 1970s and 1980s: the "art-in-public-spaces" – renowned artist's sculptures indifferent to their context installed in public space – and the "art-as-public-space" – design-oriented urban interventions (2002: 56-82). Neuhaus's approach appears more similar to Richard Serra's *Titled Arc* (1981): the two artists share the same refusal of the two public art models described by Kwon and the same understanding of site-specificity and permanence, even if the "interruptive and interventionist model of site-specificity" (Kwon, 2002: 72) proposed by Serra seems to differentiate the two works. The modes of relationship of *Times Square* with its

site and audience are subtle and unobtrusive. The installation is an elusive presence: it is invisible, unmarked by any sign, and therefore anonymous, not identified as “art”; the sound texture – which resembles a bell’s resonance – is not plausible in that place, but nevertheless familiar; the equipment is not visible. The careless passer-by may cross this space every day without recognizing its presence. It is a place to discover personally: “my idea about making works in public places is about making them accessible to people but not imposing them on people”, the artist explained (Neuhaus, 1994c: 72). Neuhaus’s approach aimed at blending the work within the context and at creating an unexpected experiential involvement of the listener in his daily life.

Times Square 2002: Reinstallation

Since 1977, *Times Square* had been working day and night (except for brief interruptions for maintenance problems) until 1992, when the artist, unable to continue to maintain it by himself, finally stopped it. After some years, gallerist Christine Burgin began working on the reinstallation project with Neuhaus, obtaining the collaboration of the MTA/Arts for Transit and the financial support of Times Square BID and private residents. The work was finally reinstated on 22 May 2002.

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As the underground chamber was accessible from the subway, the original technical equipment had been stolen or lost.⁷ The reinstallation, thus, necessarily turned in a true recreation process carried out directly by the artist.

The original technologies were replaced by up-to-date equipment suitable for outdoor conditions. Neuhaus designed the new sound system in 2000 and this project was almost completely replicated during the reinstallation: the actual audio equipment consists of an MP3 audio player system (AM3 digital audio machine), two CROWN K2 amplifiers (one live and one backup), and two speakers; the entire setup is protected by airtight enclosures and a jail cell. The artist recreated the sounds on site using Max/MSP, a visual programming language that allows real-time synthesis and signal processing. The resulting MP3 files are stored in compact flash memory cards.⁸

From the beginning, the artist planned also a monitoring system which would allow the installation to be remotely controlled and to provide an alert in case of malfunction: a Sine Systems RFC-1/B Remote Facilities Controller connected to landline enables one to listen to the sounds (through a microphone placed in the speakers enclosure) and to check other parameters.⁹ In addition, Neuhaus could also control the installation daily with the help of a webcam.

Following the donation of the work to the Dia Foundation in 2002, the

artist also instituted a long-term preservation program including biannual visits to the site (Cooke, 2009: 42). During these visits, Neuhaus continued to retune the installation: he increased the output volume because he felt that the ambient sounds had become louder, and the speakers installed in 2002 were changed to improve longevity.¹⁰

If the technological components were completely replaced, the anonymous nature of the 1977 installation, instead, was fully respected. Even when the work became part of the Dia Foundation collection, no signal or plaque was used: the installation is still an anonymous and elusive presence in urban space. The only change that denotes the transition of *Times Square* from an informal system to the “institutionalization” is the power supply, which in 1977 was obtained from the public light fixture and now by an appropriate power generator.¹¹

Reinstallation as Recreation

The reinstallation of *Times Square* highlights some of the issues and challenges which conservators are facing with time-based artworks, problematizing them in the framework of site-specificity.

The first issue is the role of the artist, which is increasingly important for conservation and documentation strategies elaborated by international networks and projects such as Variable Media, Inside Installation, or Tate Modern’s conservation department. In the case of *Times Square*, the artist had a central role to the extent that he seems to assume also the conservator’s role: not only was the reinstallation carried out by him personally, he also planned a monitoring system and was directly involved in the maintenance program during the following years.¹²

Another important issue is, as Pip Laurenson states in her interview included in this book, “the role and function of the technology in the artwork” (chapter 8.3. See also Laurenson, 2004). The use of up-to-date display and production technologies confirms Neuhaus’s strictly functional conception of technology (speakers are, in fact, never visible in his installations). In 1984, he stated, “When I start a work, I start a process of research in technique. I am looking for the best means available at this time for this particular piece [...]. I don’t think it changes the essence of the work; it just changes the means I have to realize it” (1994c: 77).

In relation to these issues, the notions of authenticity and identity of the artwork become central. In *Times Square*, not only were the technologies changed, the sounds were recreated *ex novo* as well. We are not faced with a migration, but – using Variable Media terminology – with a reinterpretation of

sounds. Neuhaus refused a traditional notion of authenticity based on physical integrity. On the contrary, he was interested in reconstructing the work's "identity," adopting a notion of authenticity which we could compare to the one proposed by Laurenson – based on the "work-defining" properties – or by the Variable Media Approach's method – based on the "medium-independent behaviours" of the work (Laurenson, 2006; Ippolito, 2003: 51). He used to recall that, "In music the sound is the work, in what I do sound is the means of making the work, the means of transforming space into place" (Neuhaus, 1994b: 130). Sound has no value in itself. The properties significant to the work's identity were not identified in the material components, but in the relationship with context and in the listener's experience which, as we have seen, were at the basis of the "first" *Times Square* and of coeval site-specific practices.¹³

In that sense, *Times Square* shows how every reinstallation becomes also a specific and unique "creative process" in which, as Laurenson suggests, "decisions are revisited and sometimes remade as to what aspects of the work are significant to its identity" (Laurenson, 2006).

9.4.4 FROM ARCHIVAL MODEL TO EXHIBITION PLATFORM? VIDEO ART AS A WEB RESOURCE AND THE IMAI ONLINE CATALOGUE

Renate Buschmann

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Video art has become a dominant force in the contemporary art world since it began over 40 years ago, and many artists now work with this medium as a matter of course. Characterized by its dual visual and auditory nature and its flowing visual imagery, video art has, throughout its history, reacted to technological developments, not only continuously challenging habitual modes of seeing but also demanding unconventional contexts of presentation.¹⁴ Whenever new technologies of information and communication became available in the past, they generally gave rise to new options for producing and exhibiting contemporary art.

With the advent of digital data transfer, it has become possible to spread videos over the Internet so that such “reproductions” can now be viewed on any computer with an Internet connection. Compared to more conventional localized exhibitions, this seems like an enticing prospect as it promises an unlimited transfer of those artworks whose audiovisual qualities can only be displayed with the help of a set of playback and display equipment (in this case, a server and a corresponding Internet platform as well as a PC with an Internet connection and a monitor). This enables audiovisual works to “travel” around the world, metaphorically speaking, without requiring transportation; theoretically, at least, they are available to every interested member of the online community. While such a global resource for the distribution of video art certainly constitutes an advantage, one must also ask whether an authentic reception of historical video art can or should legitimately take place within a new medium such as the Internet. Since the early 2000s, the World Wide Web has been used to preserve and promote video art, thus retrospectively creating – 30 years after the first major artistic video productions – conditions that seem adequate to the dissemination of this time- and technology-based art form beyond the museum’s walls. One of the first initiatives that sought to popularize video art by means of the Internet was the Media Art Archive. Created in 2005, it became available as an “online catalogue,” with the establishment of the Dusseldorf-based foundation imai – inter media art in 2006.¹⁵ In this text, the imai online video pool will serve to illustrate the functions and requirements such a platform may fulfill, while also highlighting where this type of web-based presentation conflicts with present-day ideas of copyright, originality, and reception.

It seems useful to begin with a brief historical review which will show that,

interestingly, the shift from classical modes of display in exhibitions to innovative technical contexts was not only a feature of the history of video art but also of the early stages of concept art. In both cases, the underlying curatorial intention was to design an exhibition environment that was geared towards the requirements and conditions of a novel artistic genre. It would seem that curators were especially likely to make such decisions when faced with artworks whose materiality was of a limited or non-continuous nature. Beginning in the late 1960s, concept art, the defining feature of which is dematerialization according to art critic and curator Lucy R. Lippard, provided curators with manifold occasions for testing unusual forms of display and promotion. The one-time gallery owner Seth Siegelau, for example, maintained that books or magazine issues designed by artists could replace conventional exhibitions, since concept art was about making verbal statements and sketching and documenting ideas rather than actually realizing them. In 1968, Siegelau invited seven artists to contribute 25 pages each to his *Xerox Book* which later became famous and was produced with the help of the then-popular Xerox copying technology (Altshuler, 1994: 236-240).

In November 1969, the exhibition *Art by Telephone* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago demonstrated how a medium of communication, the telephone, could be integrated into the curator's work: the participating artists, among them John Baldessari, Dennis Oppenheim, Richard Serra, and Günther Uecker, were asked to communicate all relevant instructions concerning the production and montage of their sculptures and installations by telephone, and the museum staff was then entrusted with assembling them. The artists' telephone conversations were recorded and a disk record was published in lieu of an exhibition catalogue. On the one hand, the exhibition demonstrated that concept art should primarily be understood as providing ideas purely on the level of information; on the other hand, it showcased the beginning of the global age of information and of the "global village" that Marshall McLuhan had predicted, where local distances are rendered insignificant as long as the transmission of news and information is guaranteed.¹⁶

In 1970, *Information*, an exhibition curated by Kynaston McShine at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, similarly conceptualized the dissemination of information as the core of artistic activity and of the museum's educational function. Reflecting on these issues, McShine asked a question that remains relevant today: "How is the museum going to deal with the introduction of new technology as an everyday part of its curatorial concerns?" (McShine, 1970: 141). A progressive way of dealing with this matter was evident in the film and video section which included a cinematheque – an "information machine" – devised by the Italian designer Ettore Sottsass, Jr., especially for this occasion, where viewers could choose among a large selection of artis-

tic productions and watch them on one of 40 monitors. Here, the difference between concept and video art was palpable: while the former does not necessarily have to assume a material form and can instead rely on the spectator's imagination, visualizing the information stored on the videotape is an existential act if the artwork is to be perceived for even a brief period of time. While the first group exhibition of video art, *TV as a Creative Medium*¹⁷ at the Howard Wise Gallery in summer 1969, remained committed to the traditional gallery space, Gerry Schum in 1968 began to pursue the far-reaching idea of a "television gallery" (Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 2003). Schum was committed to an effective fusion of the contents of concept art and their visualization by means of television and video and managed to persuade several influential concept artists to collaborate with him; together, they produced tapes that are now widely regarded as pioneering works of video art. Crucially, Schum's aim was to transform television into a theater stage for his concept art or rather video art exhibitions, to thereby overcome the borders of traditional art reception, and to use this increasingly influential mass medium to reach a wider audience.

What these historical models illustrate is that the promotion of the immaterial but technology-dependent genre of video art is usually associated with a reliance on new information technologies for the purpose of presentation. Accordingly, the Internet and its globally accumulated data network represent another challenging medium of dissemination. For the old Media Art Archive and today's imai's online catalogue, however, Internet accessibility was not the foremost concern; rather, it was an obvious implication of an extensive process of archiving and preservation. Beginning in the early 1980s, the Cologne-based media company 235Media had established itself as the only German distributor of video art, assembling, in the course of 20 years, an impressive archive of international video art. When it became clear in the early 1990s that the lifespan and stability of video storage media were limited, and that therefore backup procedures were necessary, the response was to initiate a large-scale conservation program. Between 2003 and 2005, the company's research team viewed some 3,000 tapes of video art and documentaries, drew up a list of priorities based on conservational and art historical considerations, and finally set out to digitize more than 1,200 videos. It was also decided that an Internet platform would be developed with a view to making this new video database accessible to the public. The Media Art Archive went online in 2005, interestingly, the same year that marked the beginning of the now-legendary video portal YouTube. The following year, the Media Art Archive, along with its stock of videos and video distribution network, became the basis of the newly founded Dusseldorf-based imai foundation. Currently titled the *imai Online Catalogue*, the video platform comprises several tasks: it provides a detailed

list of the foundation's collections, it serves as a catalogue for the video distribution program, it provides students, instructors and scholars with a research tool for audiovisual art, and it gives a general overview of artists and artworks from the 1960s to the present.

Compared to other video databases,¹⁸ the *imai Online Catalogue* has the crucial advantage of allowing users to view every video in its full length. While other databases only show selected sequences, often lasting less than one minute, or only provide complete access to a limited number of users, the *imai Online Catalogue* allows users to access all information free of charge and does not require prior registration. All videos can be played in their full length with a small-format QuickTime frame; metadata and additional documents provide further information about the video and the artist, and search functions (by artist, title, year and keyword) allow users to browse the extensive database. The Online Catalogue differs from other databases precisely in that it is not just a collection of facts but actually gives users the option of viewing audiovisual works in their full length, which is what makes it an important institution for conducting online research about video art in a visually concrete way. This sort of comprehensive online publication that does not merely quote from the works in question requires a legal basis. As a rule, when museums, institutions, or private collectors buy a video work, they also acquire the right to screen it exclusively in their premises, effectively prohibiting its online publication. The imai foundation, however, in its capacity as a distributor of video works, has signed legal agreements with the artists listed in its database that permit the presentation of their videos via the imai website. The *imai Online Catalogue* nevertheless deliberately refrains from showing videos in the kind of high-resolution and full-screen mode that Internet users have come to expect, instead opting for a preview quality that is designed to protect the artworks against illegal distribution.

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This restriction reveals the discrepancy that exists between the aim of making video art accessible online on the one hand and the artists' legitimate wish to protect themselves from copyright infringements on the other. When artists decide to make their works available in good quality on popular platforms, as many have done in recent times, they are simply exercising their discretion as copyright holders. An institution such as the imai archive, however, must choose modes of online presentation that do not interfere with a work's characteristic features, especially since many of them may now be considered historical. On the one hand, transferring a video archive into a public terrain such as the Internet affords the possibility of reaching a range of viewers that is larger than, and different from, the sort that one would find in the controlled environment of a museum, and of allowing them a greater degree of flexibility. On the other hand, it is important to bear in mind that such tech-

nological innovations mean that online viewers necessarily adopt a mode of perception that is quite different from the way the artwork in question was originally displayed. Much has been made of the fact that the aesthetic impact of video art is very much dependent on its modalities of presentation (see, for example, Schubinger, 2009; Blase and Weibel, 2010). Even though the *imai Online Catalogue* mostly consists of single-channel videos whose instruments of presentation do not have definite sculptural qualities (unlike video sculptures and installations), one could still legitimately ask whether a screening that is not based on the technology that was prevalent when the video was first made does not effectively preclude an authentic reception.¹⁹ This would mean that all videos from the 1970s, the 1980s, and even the 1990s should not be made available on the Internet as a matter of principle. However, this distinctly historicist attitude is countered by a host of other curatorial opinions whose influence can be observed (among other places) in several exhibitions where videos are displayed on almost standardized neutral black monitors, in a “black framing” (Amman, 2009: 217ff.). The *imai Online Catalogue*’s reduced viewing window accommodates such considerations and thus constitutes a compromise that enables an online presence of historic videos while simultaneously making it clear that their display on the Internet cannot be considered an equivalent to the original version.

The mode of display is, without a doubt, of crucial relevance where the works in question convey a message that relies on the nature and disposition of the television broadcast and the video recording or of the television set and monitor box. The *imai Online Catalogue* features some such examples: Douglas Davids, in his video *The Last Nine Minutes* (1977), refers to a spatial investigation inside the monitor box; Mike Hentz in *Green-Phase* (1978/80) experiments with the ambiguity of the monitor screen, even breaking it towards the end of his performance; Franziska Megert’s video *Off* (1989) consists of electronic residual signals from CRT televisions, and Michael Langoth’s video *Retracer* (1991) requires a conventional television set as a frame, because the events taking place on the screen are sucked into such a television by a zoom in the video (see Fig. 9.5 in color section). Where works like these are presented on a flat screen that is connected to the Internet, this will inevitably entail a loss of visual perception and authenticity that the viewer must compensate for by relying on his or her context sensitivity and abstracting from the present conditions of reception. Within the *imai* collection, however, such cases are relatively rare and it was therefore decided to integrate them into the catalogue for reasons of documentation.

Presently, the archival character of the *imai Online Catalogue* is very much in the foreground (see Fig. 9.6 in color section). The *imai* team has managed to establish a point of contact by way of the Internet that enables those inter-

ested to tour the video art archive which had previously received little attention and could not be visited at an actual location.

Viewers may now enjoy the flexibility of selecting videos based on their individual preferences, and of beginning, interrupting, resuming, and repeating the playback at any time that suits them (see Fig. 9.7 in color section). In 2008, imai launched the “video art kitchen” series which represented a first step towards providing online visitors with thematically arranged, “curated” compilations of videos from its archival collection.²⁰ These collections gather video works under diverse headings such as scratch videos, gender, dance, and audiovisuality, and do not only help viewers orientate themselves within the immense archival collection, but also accentuate contents and motifs that have been prominent in video art throughout the past decades. In this sense, the “video art kitchen” constitutes an experimental contribution to the project of probing the *imai Online Catalogue*’s exhibition potential, while remaining within its previously established framework.

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It was observed above that the dematerialization of video art as well as the technical options for displaying it – which must be customized accordingly – are pivotal for inspiring a reflection on adequate modes of Internet presentations. It is possible that the reception of this genre requires a more subjective, private kind of “seeing,” since it has been shown that in conventional exhibition contexts, spectators find it difficult to direct their attention towards the entire (and often unknown) duration of a video artwork (Graham and Cook, 2010: 100-103). The media lounges that have recently become popular in museums and exhibitions are rooted in the idea of showing video art in a private, pleasant atmosphere. Internet galleries and archives may have precisely this advantage of providing the comfort of bringing art into one’s “own living room,” the premise being that it is easier to focus on time-based artworks in one’s own four walls than in a public space. But the opposing view, according to which the Internet induces people to consume a confusing wealth of information and images in a restless and superficial manner, is equally prevalent. The recent launchings of Google museums and online art fairs underpin the idea that a physical encounter with, and perception of, the original artwork is of secondary importance, and that consequently its online copy becomes a veritable replacement on account of its constant viewing and unlimited accessibility.

Although online presentations are becoming ever more popular, video art archives such as the *imai Online Catalogue* must perform a complex balancing act if they are to satisfy their users’ wish for a maximum of high-quality information and simultaneously meet the necessary standards regarding copyright law and the authenticity of artworks. Bringing video art to Internet portals prompts many questions, especially where the archival character is

replaced by an exhibition format involving full-screen displays in high resolution. These questions have yet to be conclusively answered. Is it admissible for all videos – no matter which period they belong to – to homogenously appear on the computer screen, whose appearance and material character is rooted in contemporary technological culture? What sorts of transformations occur where playback parameters such as contrast, brightness, color, and volume are no longer determined by artists and curators but are subjectively determined by the viewer? How can, where larger screen displays are available, original specifications regarding format and basic settings be guaranteed every time the video is viewed? Will it be possible in the future to provide not just single-channel videos but also video installations with an adequate mode of online presentation? In theory, the web-based distribution of video art presents a great opportunity for drawing attention to an artistic genre that, on account of its difficult accessibility, has long been neglected by scholars and museums alike. In practice, however, it remains necessary to develop viable database models for video art so that an adequate interface design and innovative software may respond to the specifics of historical and contemporary video art.

NOTES

- 1 More and more installations whose architecture was conceived in the white cube are thus seen out in the city dialoguing with the environment and exposed to all interactions and mutations, depending on the projection sites.
- 2 The term [“accordage”] was borrowed from Daniel Stern (1985) by Raymond Bellour to define the relation of the spectator to the film. See Bellour (2002).
- 3 The DVD was produced as part of a larger research project that also included a database on films shot between 1896 and 1973, which is available at <http://vads.ahds.ac.uk/resources/CF.html>.
- 4 The following quotation from Bergson’s *Matter and Memory* was projected at the entrance of the installation: “Images are perceived when senses are open to them. These images react to each other in accordance with laws I call laws of nature and, as a perfect knowledge of laws would probably allow us to calculate and foresee what will happen in each of these images. The future of the images must be contained in their present.”
- 5 I would like to deeply thank Silvia Neuhaus, Patrick Heilman, Christine Burgin, and Cory Mathews for generously providing valuable and essential information and documents without which this text would not have been possible.
- 6 Even if some details of the original technical equipment are not clear, comparing the documentation I was able to find, I may suppose that, in 1977, the sound system was composed by custom sound synthesis electronic circuits, an amplifier, and the large horn-like loudspeaker Neuhaus mentions. In a proposal submitted in March 1974 to the Rockefeller Foundation, and conserved in its archive (“Subway Vent. A proposal for a sound installation for Times Square,” 1974, p. 5, folder entitled “Hear.Inc. 2 1975-1978,” box R1672, series 200R, Record Group A81, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York) Neuhaus described the project technologies (Max Neuhaus, “Electronic components and sub-assemblies; Loudspeaker – Klipsch model K-D-FB; Amplifier – Bozak CMA-1-120”) and mentioned the “Design of sound generating unit” suggesting the design of specific electronics for the installation. One of Neuhaus’ *drawings* (Neuhaus, 1983: 17) shows that this resonance system was originally located at the left side of the triangular-shaped chamber’s base. It remains unclear if other speakers were used: in one photograph (Fig. 9.4), it is possible to see also two high-frequency horns. Some images of the equipment installation are included in a video by John Sanborn and Kit Fitzgerald (1982, <http://www.max-neuhaus.info/neuhaus-tsq.htm>) and in the poster for *Times Square*.
- 7 Christine Burgin, email to the author, 17 June 2010.
- 8 During my research, detailed technical specifications were not found. The information about the technical equipment, the monitoring system and the maintenance program (unless otherwise specified) is the result of several email

exchanges (8-28 February 2011) with Patrick Heilman, Dia Foundation's digital media specialist, who worked with Neuhaus after the donation of *Times Square* to the Dia Foundation. The information about the project designed in 2000 is drawn from Neuhaus's equipment block diagram and a quotation form by audio consultant David Andrews dated 18 July 2000.

- 9 The RFC-1/B is programmed to call every day and also to report on four possible modes of system failure: "loss of signal from the loudspeaker," "opening of the locked door to the cage," "loss of AC power," and "change in the loudness level of the loudspeaker" (letter by David M. Andrews to Christine Burgin, 14 May 2002). The equipment block diagram shows that, in the first project, Neuhaus thought to use another system: a Sine System DAI-1.
- 10 A new, more resistant formulation of speakers was chosen by the artist, who personally retuned the installation on this occasion as well, because this altered the installation's sounds.
- 11 Christine Burgin, email to the author, 17 June 2010.
- 12 This fact, on the other side, could also be the reason for the lack of detailed documentation on both the 1977 and the current installation. We could also suppose that, in the future, when the technologies used to produce and display the work may become obsolete, replacing them without the artist's intervention may be problematic.
- 13 This case seems antithetical to the examples of relocation or refabrication of site-specific artworks from the 1960s and 1970s on the occasion of important exhibitions which took place in the last decades (Kwon, 2002: 33-43): site and ways of exhibition remained unaltered.
- 14 Two books have recently been published that explore the exhibiting of video and media art: Amman (2009); Graham and Cook (2010).
- 15 See <http://www.imaionline.de/onlinekatalog>.
- 16 McLuhan first adumbrated this idea in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, published in 1962, and subsequently expanded on it in *The Global Village* (1989) (McLuhan and Powers, 1989).
- 17 Ira Schneider published a filmic documentation of the exhibition which can be viewed in the imai Online Catalogue.
- 18 For a comparison of online archives of media art, see Blome (2009).
- 19 Christoph Blase remarks: "In actual fact one could say that playing vintage videos on modern screens is almost tantamount to falsifying the artwork." (Blase, 2010: 380).
- 20 See <http://www.imaionline.de/videoartkitchen>.

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